

THE ETHICS
— OF —
AMERICAN SLAVERY.



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THE ETHICS
OF
AMERICAN SLAVERY,
BEING
A VINDICATION
OF THE
WORD OF GOD AND A PURE CHRISTIANITY IN ALL
AGES, FROM COMPLICITY WITH INVOLUNTARY
SERVITUDE ; AND A DEMONSTRATION THAT
AMERICAN SLAVERY IS A CRIME IN
SUBSTANCE AND CONCOMITANTS,
BY
AN AMERICAN CITIZEN.

Thompson R.

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TO
THE AMERICAN PEOPLE,
OF
ALL CREEDS AND PARTIES—NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST
THIS LITTLE WORK IS
DEDICATED BY THE AUTHOR,
IN THE SINCERE HOPE, THAT IT MAY AID THEM IN THESE TIMES
“THAT TRY MEN’S SOULS,”
TO
A RIGHT DETERMINATION OF SOME OF THOSE VITAL QUESTIONS
AFFECTING
OUR ACTION AS INDIVIDUALS,
AND OUR POLICY AND STANDING BEFORE THE WORLD,
AS AN ENLIGHTENED, PROSPEROUS, AND
CHRISTIAN PEOPLE.

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THE ETHICS OF SLAVERY.

CHAPTER I.

DEFINITIONS.

Two words are the key to this work. They are SERVICE and SERVITUDE. One is recognized alike by Divine and human ethics; the other is abhorrent to both. Service is free, covenanted, honorable. Servitude is constrained and degrading. Service is for a day, a week, a year, or years. Servitude is for life. Service exacts specific duties. Servitude demands the all of a human being—even the fruit of his loins. Service implies subordination, and often allegiance. It implies on the part of those to whom service is rendered, rule, lordship, or an exercise of authority, but under limitations. It is simply the obligation of man to man. The word has neither stain nor sting. The Word of God sanctions it—service of worshipping hearts to their Maker; of soldiers in war; of civilians in society; of servants in the

house and in the field. It is *liable* to abuse, yet abuse has here unnumbered checks. Servitude, on the other hand, *is essentially abuse* with no check beyond the holder's conscience or caprice. This word the Bible and humanity abhor ; they cast it out as base, mean, tyrannic. They refuse, and scorn, and reprobate it, as destructive alike to the value and the dignity which they ever attribute to the image of the Creator.

But is this true of modern, our most modern servitude?—Servitude, in our American, enlightened, Christian States? Surely none the less so because modern, as a glance at the system may show. The Spanish law reprobates it in the very definition it gives : “Slavery is the condition of a man who is the property of another *against natural right* ;” which means simply a legalize iniquity. A *crime* suffered and sanctioned by society ; a *wrong* lifted into a show of rightfulness, by specific laws, which set aside Divine and moral sanctions in order to give it operation.

In entire harmony with this honest renunciation is the definition given, by the laws of South Carolina, which may represent the actual status of the slave in all our slaveholding States.

“Slaves shall be deemed sold, taken, and reputed to be chattels personal, in the hands of their owners, and possessors, their executors, administrators and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever.”

Slavery, under this law, reduces man to the condition of a chattel, so far as such an agent can be thus reduced. It bears some features which need a distinct presentation.

By such laws

1. The slave has no legal right of property.
2. He cannot recover damages if injured by others or by his master.
3. He has no right of redemption ; and as a privilege it is restrained or denied.
4. He has no right to make contracts.
5. He is bound to execute whatever kind and amount of labor the master may impose.
6. He is liable to any punishment the master may inflict.
7. He is liable to sale from the woman he calls wife, and from his children.
8. He has no parental authority or rights—no connubial rights save by permission of the master.
9. He is liable, with his offspring, to sale, or to descend, by inheritance, to persons of the most cruel and despotic dispositions.
10. He is essentially the property of the master—as completely in almost every respect as the master's ox or mule.
11. He is allowed only that degree of culture, moral and intellectual, which the master may allow ; and is generally prohibited from learning even the alphabet.

This system of servitude we call slavery. A term which cannot surely be censured for severity.

But a question may arise, whether the laws of the slave States do not, in a measure, at least, become obsolete ; whether, as in our own country, social and religious influences do not deprive legal statutes of their severity, and the actual status of the slave be less degrading and severe than the outline and law given above, would indicate ? To this question the most satisfactory reply will be found in the ruling of courts of justice, in cases of trial, for severity exercised toward a slave.

In every community there are men of base and sordid passions, who will abuse power if it is given them, and who are restrained only by legal penalties. Some men are indeed better than the laws, but there are commonly very many ready to creep through every mesh, for whom penalties are necessary, as a check. — Are such penalties imposed by law, and executed by the officers of law, when complaint of cruelty is made ? The following decisions may serve as examples of the social and legal sentiment of the South. They are quoted by E. K. Whipple, in an able tract, on the family as affected by slavery :

“In a case of cruel and unreasonable punishment, not resulting in death, ‘States vs. Mann,’ Decem. term, 1829, 2 Devereaux’s North Carolina Rep. 263, the opinion of the Court, delivered by Judge Ruffin, afterward Chief Justice of the State of

North Carolina, contained the following statement :

“ The end [of slavery] is the profit of the master, his security, and the public safety ; the subject, one doomed, in his own person and his posterity, to live without knowledge and without the capacity to make anything his own, and to toil that another may reap the fruits. What moral considerations shall be addressed to such a being, to convince him what it is impossible but that the most stupid must feel and know can never be true—that he is thus to labor upon a principle of natural duty, or for the sake of his own personal happiness? Such services can only be expected from one who has no will of his own ; who surrenders his will in implicit obedience to that of another. Such obedience is the consequence only of uncontrolled authority over the body. There is nothing else which can operate to produce this effect. THE POWER OF THE MASTER MUST BE ABSOLUTE TO RENDER THE SUBMISSION OF THE SLAVE PERFECT. I most freely confess my sense of the harshness of this proposition. I feel it as deeply as any man can. AND, AS A PRINCIPLE OF MORAL RIGHT, EVERY PERSON IN HIS RETIREMENT MUST REPUDIATE IT. But, in the actual condition of things, it must be so. There is no remedy. This discipline is INHERENT IN THE RELATION OF MASTER AND SLAVE. Judgment entered for the defendant.”

“ In ‘ State of South Carolina vs. Mauer,’ 2 Hill’s Rep., 453, Judge O’Neal says :

“ The criminal offence of assault and battery cannot, at common law, be committed upon the person of a slave. For notwithstanding [for some purposes] a slave is regarded by law as a person, yet generally he is a mere chattel person-

nal, and his right of personal protection belongs to his master, who can maintain an action of trespass for the battery of his slave. There can be, therefore, no offence against the State for a *mere beating of a slave unaccompanied with any circumstances of cruelty*, or an attempt to kill and murder. The peace of the State *is not thereby broken* ; for a slave is not generally regarded as legally capable of being within the peace of the State. He is not a citizen, and is not in that character entitled to her protection."

The actual cruelties charged upon masters in these cases of investigation, we forbear to give. That they were of an aggravated nature is sufficiently obvious from the fact of an investigation being made. That the master would find *not restraint but encouragement* to renew the cruelty, is also obvious from the character of the decisions. But here is another, of later authority, too late, alas ! for the honor of America :

"*'Souther vs. the Commonwealth of Virginia,'* 7 Grattan, 673, 1851. In delivering the opinion of the Court, Judge Field said :

"It has been decided by the Court in *Turner's* case, 5 Rand, that the owner of a slave, for the malicious, cruel, and excessive beating of his own slave, cannot be indicted. It is the policy of the law in respect to the relation of master and slave, and for the sake of securing proper subordination and obedience on the part of the slave, to protect the master from prosecution in all such cases [of punishment not resulting in death,] even if the whipping and punishment be malicious, cruel, and excessive."

These rulings are quite sufficient for our purpose, which is, to show what slavery actually is, in our own land ; and to enable us with clear distinctions, to inquire into the Christian lawfulness or unlawfulness of the system.

CHAPTER II.

PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION.

SLAVERY is the child of force. It is the hand of power alone that first imposes the condition of slavery upon any class of our fellow men. It has no ground of ethical right, or legal obligation, or natural distinction upon which it can base a defence of its first making man a slave.

The foundation of philosophy, as it regards human relations, is *the equality of man in respect to essential rights*. It recognizes no natural distinction. If distinction is justly made as between governed and governing, servant and master, it can come only by covenant on the part of the superior, and concession on the part of the subordinate, and is hence the result of mutual contract. Any assumption of power beyond the limit of concession, philosophy brands as despotism and tyranny. It proclaims it at war with the first principles of social and political bodies.

Philosophy allows of no obligation from one man to another without an equivalent. But slavery violates this principle of equity. It makes man a slave by constraint, and binds him, person, and powers, and property to the absolute disposal

of the master, without compensatory obligations. Philosophy, hence, cannot recognize as just any such relation. Any approximation toward such constraint ; any such unjust assumption of privilege and power, it ever has, it ever must pronounce *essentially wrong*.

Nor can slavery more justly be regarded as a legal relation.

True, it is declared such ; but the point I make is, that *if so, it is unjustly*. The slave has no legal rights, he can hence have no legal obligations. The law treats him as property, as property, in nearly the same sense as the plantation team. He can hence no more justly be said to be legally bound to service than the horse or mule. The constraint in each case is one of force. Society transcends its own definition of legal rights and obligations when it legislates in reference to the slave. The laws of slave States declare the slave a chattel, and yet impose obligation and penalty, as if he were a person. In all such cases legislation is guilty of the stupendous absurdity of making the slave a person and a thing at the same time. If he is one he cannot be the other, nor can he be both. The owner of a vicious animal is held responsible for any injury committed by it. The slave is himself called to account and punished, while the master bears no responsibility, but actually receives damage for the loss of his servant. The incongruities attending all such legislation are

manifest, yet this sad conflict is revealed in every slave code. It seeks in vain to reduce the slave quite to the condition of a chattel, for the stamp of the Maker's image is so clearly revealed, in the face and mind of the black, that the effort leads to endless absurdities.

Slavery is quite as inconsistent with the dictates of our moral nature. Every man possesses an individual worth, and obligations to the fulfilment of which he is personally held. These obligations he cannot transfer to another. To give up his individual liberty, so far as the restraint binds him, is to disqualify himself for fulfilling the great objects of his being. Moral law recognizes man solely as an individual. Society is perfect just as far as it most completely recognizes this truth, and enables man to fulfill, most perfectly, the ends of his individual being. Any restraint upon this right and duty of man, is an aggression, against which his nature must cry out in reprobation of the wrong.

Were I to assume the power or right to enslave my reader, he would remonstrate against the act as an outrage upon his natural rights. But in such a remonstrance he would only express a conviction which ought to be as authoritative were I to attempt the enslaving of his own brother, or any fellow-man, of whatever race or social condition. Such a conviction is instinctive with man as man. It is not passing the truth, therefore, to say that

we must regard as unnatural, arbitrary, and degrading, any law that places one man in possession of another, in the sense and with only the rights of property. For any man to assume power to sell, to task, to beat, to imprison, to sunder from wife and children, to deprive of all intellectual and moral culture a fellow man, is to assume a power over him which the most arbitrary government never transcended. To assume to do all this at the mere will of the holder, without process of law, or any exercise of equity, beyond the caprice or conscience of the holder, is despotism and tyranny beyond the usual meaning of those dread words.

These are plain statements. Here are three of the highest authorities, recognized as the law of human conduct, all which plainly oppose the enslaving of man. There is one authority still higher, and absolute. Does Christianity sanction human slavery? In other words, may it ever, and has it ever been imposed in obedience to the revealed will of God?

I do not raise the question, whether God, as sovereign, *might not* make a requisition to enslave as well as to destroy men. The question is, whether he has done so; and what does the precedent warrant in us.

Again, the question is not whether He has *suffered slavery*, or *threatened* it by the hands of ungodly nations, or by His prophets *predicted* the subjection

of one people to another? God indeed makes the wrath of man his sword, but evils are not from Him by *purpose*, but by *sufferance*; and the evil-doer, unconsciously, working out, by his wickedness, the advancement of the just, is still guilty. "He is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity;" yea, "though hand join in hand the wicked shall not go unpunished." · To return then, the simple question to be discussed, is this, Have we any revelation from God sanctioning such a relation of slavery?

CHAPTER III.

IMPORTANCE OF THE QUESTION.

SUCH a question is of obvious importance, in view of the conflict of slavery with philosophy and the moral dictates of the human mind, as shown in the last chapter.

1. It is because of this remonstrance of our moral nature, that we find a large class of sceptical minds choosing as the field of attack upon Christianity the supposed warrant of the Scriptures for involuntary servitude. To such minds natural religion is the ultimate rule. Nothing gratifies them more, than to find the sanctions of revealed religion in conflict with the form to which they appeal.

They may admit its moral precepts salutary, and its summary of human duty comprehensive and beneficent, but when you take your Bible and begin to cite a Divine warrant for a system acknowledged to be the fountain of innumerable and inevitable evils, and in its very root in conflict with philosophy and humanity, you give them an advantage. As they would reject a preacher guilty of teaching any known im-

morality—so they reject the Bible, as unreliable and not divine, on the ground of its teaching a gross moral wrong.

Such an objection cannot be shuffled off as unimportant ; nor can it be met by referring to a darker period in the life of the race ; nor yet by evasive reference to the abstract right of Deity as sovereign. These men, are many of them, men of intelligence and social worth. They state the objection fairly. It is a source of perplexity. They cannot believe slavery right. They suppose it sanctioned in the word of God, and they stand in the dilemma of believing a word bearing the sanction of a wrong, or of rejecting the word as from God. We are bound, if possible, to remove the stumbling block, which arrests the approach of such minds to the word of God. We must meet them on Bible grounds, and give the best answer in our power to the objection.

2. The question is again important from its relation to a large class of Christian men.

Many of them have withdrawn from the religious bodies of the land, because the churches have sanctioned or refuse to condemn slavery. There are others still in the churches who are perplexed with the question, who suppose the Bible to be silent on the wrongs of the relation, if it does not warrant it, who hence hope against hope in the mental conflict they feel. Much of our disrespect for those branded as "Seceders,"

'Abolitionists,' 'Agitators,' has come from the persuasion, that the Bible does not condemn the system of slavery, and therefore we should not.

3. The question is important also from its relation to the action of the American Church.

It is a singular fact that the form of domestic slavery now prevalent, was partially the fruit of religious feeling. Cupidity was indeed the real motive—these Christian views only the cover to the wrong. The Spaniards, who settled in North America, looked upon the Indians much in the same light in which ancient nations as the Roman and Greek viewed the Barbarians, "as having the body only to obey, while themselves possessed the power and understanding to rule."*) But it made a prominent argument that the Indians could more easily be converted to Christianity in slavery than in freedom.

Similar was the plea under which the Negro was first enslaved. The cry was one of humanity. Humanity to the Indian who wasted away under the toil and hardships of bondage. Humanity to the black, who was to be brought from the depth of pagan darkness, and placed under the care of Christian Masters, thus to be gradually introduced to the light and salvation of the gospel.

It was this specious pretext, which was thrown to the Christian world to cover the enormity of

* Aristotle.

the wrong; a pretext, alas! too successful in blinding the church, and preventing the protest of its piety and humanity. So plausible seemed the argument, that even church functionaries of high standing seized upon it as a successful and cheap means of propagating the gospel. The enslaving of the African was not asserted right. The best face it could bear was doing evil that good might come. But

“New times demand new manners.”

The argument so potent in the establishment of slavery has lost its weight for perpetuating it. Then men were to be enslaved for the culture of the mind and the welfare of the soul. Now to keep them enslaved—all moral and intellectual culture is withheld—save a little oral instruction. Then slavery did not claim a divine sanction. It made no boast of a scriptural support. It was based upon the plea, that while involving a temporary evil, the end justified the means, since the salvation and civilization of the black, was held to be an ample compensation for the wrong in making him a slave.

How different is the teaching of the South now in its arrogant assumptions? To illustrate the position it takes, and to show the importance of the question, in view of such claims, take a single statement of high religious authority—it being from the Southern Presbyterian Review (O. S.):

“Whatever may be true or false of other na-

tions generally, whatever of other Africans,—as concerns those Africans who live among us, they are justly held by us in bondage. Towards them we have duties, over them we have rights. The existing relation between the white and the black man in these Southern States is a necessary, and a just, and a good relation. It is the best form of society possible amongst us. It is good not only for us, but good for them. Evils, and some of them great ones, evils to us and evils to them, are no doubt to be connected incidentally with the relation. (and what human relation is without incidental evils?) but the relation itself, is the very best possible for both the races, thus strangely brought together in God's mysterious providence. Existing as they do in the midst of us, the end of this relation would necessarily be the end of all their wonderful progress—the beginning of their retrogression, very rapidly, into the barbarism out of which we have been God's agents in partly reclaiming them; and existing as they do in the midst of us, the end of this relation would be the end of all ability on our and their part to dwell peaceably together. Therefore the relation is good. And born under it, we and they both like it; and under it, all things taken into view, we and they constitute together perhaps the happiest people in the whole world! Such we conceive to be the position which the South takes."

We refer the reader also to recent fragments and volumes, like the sermon of Dr. Palmer, Seabury's and Van Evrie's works and others, where the argument is pushed to the very verge of Atheism. They do not indeed quite cast the Negro out of

the pale of humanity.* But they do suggest the question, and yet leave it unanswered. Are, then, Africans of the race of our Adam—or of some other, unrevealed in the word of God? This is dangerous ground. These men recoil from the precipice whereon they stand. They return to ground which is more biblical, leaving the

* These writers do not indeed all take the same decided ground, yet they agree virtually, in making the negro a different human being from the white man, physically and mentally, and on the ground of assumed natural inferiority and weakness, justify Slavery by the law of nature and the law of God.

The Shetland pony differs from the Morgan horse in "color, figure, hair, features, language, brain, &c.," yet no scholar would presume even for a sensation volume, to declare them of different species. The difference is wholly accounted for by the influence of climate and usage. The same causes make the black differ from the white, and the very "mullatoism" of which one of these authors so often speaks, proves the original identity of the races, absolutely beyond a question. More than this, one of the prominent causes of African degradation these authors ignore—the cruelty of the whites in devastating their lands and tribes; in grinding them down here and in Africa to the condition of a fugitive and despised people, a process which would in less centuries, utterly extinguish the race of whites.

There is an absurdity in these volumes, rendering them undeserving of protracted reply. They attempt to separate incidents which on their own premises are inseparable, for admitting that the black is human—though widely different in color and position from the white—it is impossible to strike away the "moral, religious, and social element," and leave it to mere "economical and political" considerations. The question of the oppressed African meets us at every page of each discussion, asking, "Am I not a man and a brother?" with the same breath, the South says Yes, and No. But reason and humanity, and Scripture, answer only yes; and as a man and a brother, the moral and religious aspects of this question are as inseparable from it as light from day. It has been the curse of Africa that these aspects have been so long ignored—we must return to them.

Negro still a part and parcel of our race, and so with us subjects of divine solicitude and salvation. If they cast him down, they do not cast him out, and hence, on moral grounds, must the subject be discussed to meet the work of such minds, who are raining inhumanity and scepticism upon the entire nation.

These are more melancholy instances of defending slavery by the Scriptures. The Methodist Episcopal church South, the second religious body in numbers, after declaring in a previous General Conference, that the general rule on slavery, referred to the slave trade, at a late session rescinded the rule entire! This action was taken while Southern politicians, including Governors of States, were advocating the re-opening of the slave trade! It was a voluntary and deliberate removal from the Book of Discipline, of the only passage which it contained, conveying a suggestion of wrong in slavery. *It hence throws wide open the door to a practice of the traffic, by any of its members in any form, without liability to church censure or discipline.*

Following in the same path, the Union Assembly of Southern Presbyterians separated from the General Assembly solely on the ground of slavery, that its members might continue the practice, without fear of question or rebuke by their brethren, holding different views from themselves. How does the South interpret this action? A

single quotation, the sentiment of which might be gleaned from many sources may suffice.

It is in view of the action of the M. E. church in expunging the rule on slavery, that the *Richmond Whig* justly asks: "When a whole Christian denomination see nothing wrong, or immoral, or improper in the buying and selling of men, women and children with an intention to enslave them, why should mere politicians presume to pronounce as wicked and atrocious the re-opening of the African slave trade?"

Comment is needless.

The question becomes more important from the fact, that the church is the exponent of Christian doctrine. The church is also the standard of the public conscience, and it is hence of momentous consequence, that her teaching be clear and correct on all points involving the wrong practice of its members, or of its congregations.

Let the churches of America for example approve of or refuse to disapprove of dancing and what is the result? The youth of the land seldom care to study the bearing of the word of God upon such an amusement, and they receive the action of the church as authoritative. "Grave Christian men approve of the amusement. I may practice it;" or "grave Christian men are aware of the custom, they refuse to pronounce it sinful, it cannot be wrong to enjoy it." The conscience of nearly every young man and woman receives

its tone in relation to this amusement from the decision of the churches. If they decidedly disapprove of it, there is no thoughtful youth who will not feel at least a question of the propriety of indulging in a pleasure thus condemned.

So it is with spirituous liquors. Society at large does not brand the use of these stimulants as wrong, until the conscience of the church awakes and pronounces the use sinful. The churches embrace a large proportion of the better class of citizens. The public conscience must therefore take its tone from them.

But the standard of the church is the word of God. If the church takes that word and interprets it as silent on the sin of becoming or making drunkards, in vain will men plead for the stay of this desolating evil. If the church interprets the word as silent on the subject of slavery, men's conscience, will be silent. If it refuse to disapprove, men will both approve and practice it.

The *vox ecclesiæ* rather than the *vox populi* is to the world the voice of God. If there be any human power, which can mould into humanity toward the African, the minds of Southern men, it is the moral power of the church, sustained by the sanctions and the judgments of Heaven. It must be this "power of the world to come," which shall awe into silence the merchants, and make the slaveholder himself feel that in this moral con-

dict, not only is the conscience of the world, but the mind of the Maker arrayed against him.

There is a conscience in this matter—a conscience among Christian men, awed in contemplating this unparalleled wickedness! A conscience demanding that the churches speak out in rebuke of the system ; and that while tobacco and dancing find a place in the discussions of their deliberative bodies, and in resolutions of censure, slavery also shall be recognized as no less offensive to humanity than the weed to a refined taste ; no less abhorrent to a Christian profession in the master than is shaking heels at an evening party, to the sobriety of a Christian walk. There is a conscience at the South, trembling, most of all, to hear such a reprobation,—a disturbed mind, saying, “ Speak peace ; ” and lulled, as with anodynes, when “ Peace ” is the answer ; but shaking in fear, as over an earthquake, when the church kindly and solemnly says, “ First pure.” No peace to sin and crime. The fast, the worship, the piety God has chosen, is to “ let the oppressed go free,” to give bread to the hungry, culture to the ignorant, the healing of Christianity to wounded souls, ministering to, loving, treating the black as well as the white, as you would treat Christ in person, were he still walking among us.

This disturbed conscience is evident from the very agony with which men wrest the Scriptures for some sort of warrant with which to repel the

accusation of wrong. It is an amazing spectacle, presented at this hour. Half a million slave owners, and half a million abettors, North and South, in the church and out, voluntarily, as a final refuge, fleeing to the Word of God, and asserting a Divine warrant for the relation. On the other hand, four million slaves, every day groaning under an oppression more bitter than that of Israel in Egypt—their very helplessness, and ignorance, and suffering, crying to the throne of God—"the plea is blasphemy;" and the Christian world adding its protest against it as an inhuman and appalling crime. Verily, were we to be silent, the stones would cry out! And the dumb, mournful wail of the slave, bound in a doom, every year more terrible, would ascend to God, with the unanswerable accusation, "I was poor, sick, in prison, and in bonds, and ye remembered me not, nor plead for me, nor visited me."

Of the men (ministers of Christianity, alas!) of the North, who defend slavery, and would bind the captive with new chains,—I will not speak nor name them. They *have* their reward! I do not know of a more melancholy spectacle,—surely none more painful to a Christian heart, touched in any measure with the compassion of Jesus Christ than to look on the name of an ambassador of eternal mercy, going abroad as a sanction and in defence of the crime of slavery, in the year of grace 1861!!!

But we live in times when nothing startles ; when the fall of captains in Israel, and their complicity with evil, is only a foreshadowing of another scene, fraud, breach of great trusts, treason, perjury, rebellion in high places, wrought out as virtues by thousands, some of the most guilty of these giants in crime, it is to be feared, calling themselves Christian men !!

For the slave, and the slaveholder, for his confederates North and South, we are rejoiced that the question has taken its present aspect. It reveals one light tint in the cloud covering us ; a reverence for the Word of God. Appeal is made to it as final. With reverence and confidence do we join issue with them on this ground. Let God speak and let the whole earth be silent, for he cometh to judge the earth, and all nations by his truth.

This is just the appeal we are called upon by the Word itself to make. The Scriptures command every believer, in speaking on a moral question, or on any question involving the principles of rectitude, (if men say slavery does not involve morality, I answer, let them believe it if they can !) to speak according to the oracles of God. With reference to slaveholding, buying, selling, and all connected with it, we appeal to the Word : " Sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them that commit such things."

A word with the reader, and I enter upon the Scripture examination.

I do not hope that any one chapter of this work will give the reader a knowledge of the subject. The references to service in the Word of God, are so numerous and of such a character that a patient comparison of its teaching and statements is necessary in order to learn the whole truth. The argument we give is cumulative, and if followed patiently, I am confident an impartial judgment will assent to the conclusion, that there is no sanction of American Slavery in the Word of God ; that so far from being a Divine institution it is a relation fraught with evil, and in its very nature unnatural, oppressive, and sinful.

CHAPTER IV.

PATRIARCHAL SERVITUDE.

THE Scriptures speak of various kinds of service, of which we shall treat in the order of the second narrative. The first mentioned is that form practised by the patriarchs.

The precise nature and limits of this early system, we cannot closely define, yet this much is clear, that the service was mild, benevolent, and *voluntary*.

The servants of the patriarchs were of two classes ; those "bought with money" and those "born in the house." In Gen. xvii. 13 and 27, both classes are mentioned in the command to circumcise them. Of these servants Abraham held a large number. He is said to have armed at one time 318 to rescue his kinsman Lot : Gen. xiv. 14 to 16. The relation of these servants may be seen as in a picture, in the following passage from Harmer :

' If we should turn our thoughts to the strength of an Arab Emir, or the number of men they command, we shall find it is not great ; and that were Abraham still alive he would be a prince among them. Each of the Arab Emirs has a number of Arabs particularly attached to him, who call them-

selves his servants, but are properly his troops and attendants."

The Eastern Emir is a patriarch, with many families united to him as chief. They hold themselves as dependent and subordinate to their master mind—for this common bond of union gives them security from enemies, and unites them in a social community. "They appear," says Roberts, "as equals, and the difference between them in reference to property, is sometimes not great." The difference between "home born" and "bought" seems to have been merely this : home born servants were those who were by birth members of the community ; those bought were families and individuals engaged as servants, troops, or attendants, in times of emergency or prosperity ; and thus gradually becoming part of the common household. This distinction is implied in Genesis, xvii. 12, where home born are the kith of the household, near or remote ; strangers, or those bought, are servants incorporated from other tribes. The lapse of centuries makes no visible difference in the domestic life of eastern nomadic tribes, and the relation of master and servant now is doubtless essentially what it was among the nomadic families of patriarchal days. This is more evident from a fact still true, that intermarriage was common ; and when the chief had no male issue, a servant might become his heir, and succeed him as chief, as was the prospect with Eliezer of

Damascus. The narrative of domestic life, in those days, is minute ; but there is no hint of property in man. The whole narrative represents the parties as in this respect on an equality, living in the harmony of a voluntary relation, which when uncongenial was easily dissolved, as when the envious Sarah sends away (not sells) the servant Hagar.

Much stress is indeed laid on the words "bought with money." But we are not hastily to assume that such servants were bought of third parties, and became property. It is not true that whatever costs money *is* money. The phrase is to be interpreted by the uniform usage of Scripture, where the terms are applied to persons. This is invariably where a person *sells himself*, or enters into a voluntary contract for a period of service. Thus the children of Israel were required to purchase their first born. Ex. xiii. 14. Boaz bought Ruth. Hosea purchased his wife. Jacob bought Rachel and Leah, and not having the money, paid for them in labor seven years for each.* In Lev.

* Among many people of the East in ancient and in modern times, we find it customary not for the bride to bring a dowry to the bridegroom, but the bridegroom must in a manner purchase the girl, whom he intends to marry from the father.

* * * The qualities of the girl, the family and the fortune of him who intends to marry her, are the principal considerations in making the bargain.

A young Arab knows a girl who pleases him, he goes to the father and makes known his wishes. The father speaks to the daughter. "Daughter there is one who asks you for his wife ; the man is good, and it depends upon yourself, if you will be-

xxv. 47, the Israelite is said to become the servant of a stranger by sale. Yet he sells himself and receives himself the consideration for the contract. See Jer. xxxiv. 14—marginal reading.

This fact will be clearer if we observe the distinction uniformly made between property and servants. In Gen. xiii. 2—5, Abraham is said to have been rich in cattle, in silver and gold, but there is no intimation of property in servants.

When Hamor and Shechem speak to the Hivites of the riches of Jacob and his sons, they say, (Gen. xxxiv. 23,) "Shall not their cattle, and their substance and every beast of theirs be ours?" Yet servants are not included. In Gen. xxxi. 16, Jacob's wives say to him: "All the riches which God hath taken from our father, that is ours and our children's." An inventory follows, but while "all his cattle," "all his goods," "the cattle of his getting," are named, the numerous servants of his household are not included.

In Job xxxi. 13, 38, 39, we find that any servant might contend for his rights, and the master was bound to yield them, also that money for their services could not justly be withheld. All which shows not only that servants were not slaves, or

come his wife; you have my consent." If she refuse, the matter is ended; if she is contented, the father returns to his guest and informs him of the happy intelligence. "But," he adds, "I demand the price of the girl;" which is generally five camels.—BURDER.

subjects of involuntary servitude, but free laborers and attendants engaged by contract.

There are some instances which call for explanation.

The case of Joseph being sold into Egypt is sometimes quoted. This instance shows :

1. That slavery existed in Egypt.

2. That trading Ishmaelites commonly trafficking in "spice, balm, and myrrh," were ready on occasion to purchase a distant relative and sell him for gain.

3. That some of the sons of Jacob were base enough to sell their own brother.

4. But it *does not show that they held slaves.* The whole narrative stamps the transaction as a rare wickedness. Even Judah, though doubtless aware of the passing of the caravan, does not dream of Joseph's sale, but supposes him slain. There is as melancholy an instance in Gen. xxxiv. 27. The sons of Jacob lay waste Shechem and kill the males, taking the wives and little ones captive. The fact of not sparing the males shows that the purpose was not to acquire laborers, but to gain wealth, to gratify revenge, and to enlarge the patriarchal community, objects of Arab plundering at this day. Scott, with others, thinks that Jacob returned both the captives and the spoils. Whether he did so or not, he reprobates the crime, declares it makes their names as believers a stench among the inhabitants of the land, branding them

as robbers and men of blood, rather than peaceable children of God. In his dying day he remembers it with grief, and shakes his skirts of all complicity, declaring it unlawful, a "breaking through a wall," an act dishonorable, murderous and bloody. See Gen. xlix. 5—7.

Laban, it is said, Gen. xxix. 24, gives to his daughters "handmaids," not however as slaves, for they became wives of Jacob.*

Isaac is said, Gen. xxvi. 14, to have "had possession of flocks and possession of herds and great store of servants." It does not say possession of servants. The change in the form of expression is significant and is more marked in the original than in the translation, implying a radical distinction between the tenure held in cattle and that held in servants. The servants are included only to show his *greatness* as the context teaches. In the same manner when Jacob sent messengers to Esau, wishing to impress him with an idea of his power and prosperity, he bade them tell not only of his riches, but his *greatness*, "that he had oxen and asses and flocks and men servants and maid servants." Yet in the present, which he sent to Esau, no servants were included, though he manifestly selected the most valuable kinds of property. Gen. xxxii. 14.

In none of these passages is the right of pro-

* Compare the case of Hagar, chapter xvii. and xxi.

perty in man recognized. There is no intimation that the patriarchs bought of a third party or sold or gave away servants as slaves. An unprejudiced examination of the passages bearing on that relation, leads us unavoidably to the conclusion, that it was a voluntary relation. They were not slaves, but dependents and subjects, holding nearly if not precisely the same relation to the master, that the household and attendants of an Arab Shiek now hold toward him as their patriarch or chief. This conclusion is confirmed by the religious character of the patriarchs, who as worshippers of the true God had a far higher standard of justice and mercy, than did the heathen round about them. They held a tenure in the labor of men, secured for money or in consideration of protection and by agreement. But the narrative is wholly opposed to any such idea, as a tenure in the life and loins of a fellow man, even in relation to captives taken in war.

They who appeal to the patriarchs as an example of slaveholding, to make the appeal good, must prove,

1. That the patriarchs held slaves.
2. That they did so in unquestioned accordance with the will of God, which was to them and is to us the ultimate standard of right.

Until these things are proved, it is a reproach upon those holy men, to style our American slavery a patriarchal institution.

CHAPTER V.

BONDAGE OF THE JEWS IN EGYPT.

WE have next Egyptian bondage, or the servitude of the children of Israel while in Egypt. The instance deserves close attention, since our own system is often sternly defended by reference to this as a precedent.

That the Egyptians held domestic slaves, we admit. The case of Joseph and passages in Ex. ix. 14, 20, 21, and xi. 5, seem plainly to teach or imply the existence of such a system.

But the Israelites were not slaves, were not regarded as property. The contrast between their condition and that of slaves in our Southern States is a wide one. It is unnecessary to draw a parallel. There are certain facts which need only be pondered, and the difference will readily suggest itself to the reader's mind. For the sake of brevity I have only given references for proof, deeming the citation of texts needless, since the facts by any one familiar with the Scriptures will not be questioned.

1. The first fact is this: That the Israelites formed a separate community in Goshen, one of the most fertile districts in the land of Egypt, and

of this district they had exclusive possession. See Gen. xlv. 34, and xlvii. 6 ; also Ex. viii. 22 ; ix. 26 ; x. 23 ; xi. 7 ; xvi. 22, and xvii. 5.

2. They lived in permanent dwellings, each family by itself. Ex. xii. Acts vii. 20.

3. They were well clothed. Ex. xii. 11.

4. Their food was abundant and of great variety. Num. xi. 4 ; xxi. 5.

5. They owned flocks and herds, and very much cattle. Ex. xii. 32, 37, 38.

6. Though tributary as a colony to Egypt, they preserved their tribal and family distinctions. Ex. ii. 1 ; xii. 19, 21.

7. They were all allowed to bear arms. Ex. xxxii. 27.

8. The women were exempt from the exactions of the taskmasters ; they possessed some social refinement, were familiar with instruments of music, and skilled in the working of fine fabrics. Ex. xv. 20 ; xxxv. 25, 26.

9. Very many, if not all the people could read and write, as seems plain from Deut. xxvii. 3 ; and there was no restriction of law or usage in the acquisition of knowledge.

10. They do not appear to have been disturbed in any of their social relations or forms of worship.*

11. Their state for nearly or quite 350 years

* See Kitto and Horne.

was simply that of a tributary colony. The oppression under which they suffered was of transient duration. It came under a king who knew not Joseph. It was instigated by a fear of the increasing numbers of the children of Israel, making them a powerful body, in view not only of numbers, but from their social and religious unity. They were not, however, made slaves of. The oppression under which they groaned arose from the requirement to send levies of men to work upon the public edifices, under hard taskmasters or overseers. They suffered also by the iniquitous effort to reduce the number of Israelitish men by the slaughter of infant children. The oppression, however, began to approximate a condition of degraded slavery, and would ultimately have made them serfs, and extinguished them as a people, but for the arrest of Providence.

Some features of that system of levy were oppressive enough. Yet, in its bearing upon the body of the people, especially upon the wives and little ones, it was beneficent compared with that among ourselves. It was more truly Christian, if we may use the word in such a relation, than is the great *missionary system* of the plantations south, for which so many good men appear to hold a profound veneration.

If ever one people had a warrant for enslaving another, the Egyptians had for enslaving Israel. God had predicted that the seed of Abram should

be a stranger in a land that was not theirs, and should serve them and be afflicted four hundred years—Gen. xv. 13. They might have declared themselves only working out this behest of the Almighty in enslaving them, and might have added as a confirmation, Providence has actually brought them among us, and placed them in our power, without wish or connivance or violence on our part.

But observe in the prediction—God adds: After the allotted time, I will judge that nation whom they shall serve, and bring them out with great substance. Why judge Egypt instead of Israel? Because He had sent them down a single family, granting to Egypt, on their account, miraculous preservation and favor. He had then secured to them a place in Goshen as a colony, *to be protected, not oppressed*, until they should become a people. Egypt transcended the divine will when it began to ill-treat them. God indeed suffers it for a time, but only to secure in his people a hatred of the land, to unite them with the bond of common woes, to create an anxiety to leave Egypt, and thus to prepare them for obedience to his will in executing his purpose of redemption. Just so soon as the work of oppression had begun to develop itself as destructive, God hears the groaning of his people, and delivers them with a strong hand and an outstretched arm, judging the hardness of Egypt with fearful visi-

tations and fiery judgments, that touched every house and overthrew the throne—an open, fearful malediction upon the sin of oppressing the people of God.

The world now holds the same relation to God that Israel then did. The covenants and promises and provisions of mercy then embracing but one people, now extend to the entire race. The partition wall is broken down. It is therefore now, if for no other reason, a crime to oppress *any people*—a crime as black, as abhorrent to the attributes of Deity, as fully challenging judgment, as the crime of Egypt in oppressing the ancient Israel. “There is no difference between the Jew and the Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him.”

CHAPTER VI.

SERVITUDE AMONG THE JEWS—STATUS OF HEBREW SERVANT.

THE system of service next requiring attention is that which was practised by the Jewish people after settling in the land of Palestine, or rather that form of servitude or service which was sanctioned and limited by the Mosaic law.

In treating this system of service we must ask the reader's patience. Let him reflect that we labor under a disadvantage. Most of us from childhood have entertained the opinion that slavery did, in nearly its present form, exist among the Jews. This idea is to be removed. It has the advantage in already having possession of the reader's mind, and he must be candid and ingenuous who is ready to lay an old and long-cherished opinion at the feet of an argument, however convincing, which seeks to establish the very opposite. But I trust the reader who has followed me thus far has this candor, and I appeal with confidence to the Divine word, willing that it, and it alone, shall be the rule of faith.

Let us then, as far as possible, deem the question an unsettled one. Let us in this view seek all the light which the Scriptures offer on a question so interesting as an inquiry into the moral teaching of the Mosaic economy, and so important in its bearing upon the relation we hold as American citizens and American Christians to the system of slavery still existing in our midst.

Our first inquiry must be as to the classes of servants recognized, and the condition of each class, or the bounds and metes of the system under which the servant was held to service.

In the Mosaic law, two classes of servants are named :

1. Those who were Israelites.
2. Those from other nations.

Now, as to the first class, we are not aware that there is any question of the following facts :

1. The service of the Israelites was the result of a voluntary contract, whether relating to a Jew or a stranger as his master. The man *sold himself*, and the wages due under the contract were paid *to himself*. See Jer. xxxiv. 14 ; Deut. xv. 14 ; Ex. xxi. 2 ; Lev. xxv. 39, 42—passages all referring to, and either stating or implying the fact.

2. That agreement could in no case extend more than six years, or beyond the Sabbath year, without a new contract. Ex. xxi. 2 ; Deut. xv. 12 ; Jer. xxxiv. 14.

3. The new contract, which might be made by

going before a magistrate, could not run beyond the year of Jubilee. It might be one or forty-eight years, yet the year of Jubilee ended, in every instance, the period of service.* Lev. xxv. 39, 42, 54.

4. In cases of servitude for crime, as for theft, when unable to make the required restitution, the term of service was still limited, not by any special time term, but by the earlier or later satisfaction of the claim or penalty by the offender's labor. See Ex. xxii. 1-8.

Josephus, alluding to the law referred to in the line above, says, "Those laws ordain that the thief shall restore fourfold; and that if he have not so much, he shall be sold (indentured) indeed, but not to a foreigner, nor so that he be under perpetual slavery, for he must have been released after six years."†

In all cases, except for crime, as the above facts show, the service was rendered by voluntary and mutual agreement. The servant was a hired one, whose wages could not justly be retained. "His

* "If any one be sold to one of his own nation, let him serve him six years, and on the seventh let him go out free. But if he have a son by a woman servant in his purchaser's house, and if on account of his goodwill to his master, and his natural affection to his wife and children, he will be his servant still, let him be set free only at the coming of the year of Jubilee, and let him then take away with him his children and wife, and let them be free also."—*Josephus' Ant.*, Book iv., chap. viii., sec. 28.

† *Josephus' Ant.*, book xvi., chap., i., sec. 1.

wages shall not abide with thee all night until the morning." Thou shalt not compel him to serve as a bond servant, but a hired servant.

There are one or two cases that seem exceptions. The first is the statement made in Ex. xxi. 4.

"If his master have given him a wife, and she have borne him sons and daughters, the wife and her children shall be her master's, and he shall go out by himself." Was the woman in this case a life servant, that she could not go out with her husband? There is no evidence of this. The parties were yet single when the contracts were made, and different in date. The first indenture could not run with the man or woman beyond six years. Moses always speaks of it as ending on the *seventh year*, never on the Sabbath year. The service dated with the contract, and ran to the seventh year, regardless of the occurrence of the Sabbath year. In the case before us, the husband's contract expires, while the wife's may have three, four, or five years to run. Now, if the husband could not redeem the time of his wife, and wished to avoid a temporary separation; if from love to his master he preferred to remain, he might renew his indenture for three, or six, or forty years, at pleasure, with the master's concurrence.

The expression in Deut. xv. 18, "He hath been worth a double hired servant to thee in serving thee six years," implies that when contracts were

made for a long period of service, wages were one half those of day laborers. (So CALMET and others.) It gave the servant the benefit of a continued service, exemption from loss of time, and life with a single master, whom he loved.

The other seeming exception is in the law of Ex. xxi. 7, where it is said that a daughter, sold by her father to be a maid servant, should not go out as did the men servants.

The law in Deut. xv. 12, however, expressly includes the Hebrew woman in the number who should be released. The passage in Ex. xxi. 8-11, explains the statement. The maid servant might be indentured by the father, with a view to her marriage to the master, or the master's son: If she were really betrothed she could not go out. If she pleased not the master, he could not sell her—*i. e.*, her indenture. She might be redeemed, but he could not deal deceitfully with her after a pledge of marriage. If, however, she occupied only the position of a servant; the contract made by the father terminated the seventh year, according to the law referred to in Deut. xv. 12.*

The passages elsewhere, which are sometimes

* "It may appear at first view strange that such a law should have been given. But let it be remembered that this service could extend, at the utmost, *only six years*, and that it was nearly the same as in some cases of apprenticeship among us, when the parents *bind* the child for *seven years*, and have from his master so much per week during that period."—ADAM CLARK, *in loco*,

quoted as referring to a condition of slavery and property in man, as in Ex. xxi. 20, 21, 26, 27 ; Lev. xix. 20 ; Lev. xxii. 10-13, require no special notice. The facts stated at the outset in this chapter, as to the condition of the Hebrew servant, are not disputed. These passages may as fairly be interpreted of a contract service as of an involuntary one, and *must be*, since no other form of service could be imposed upon a Hebrew. The commentaries in daily use explain them in accordance with the admitted facts, and the argument need not be prolonged. The reader will bear in mind as we proceed, that no Israelite could be reduced to slavery, his service being for the terms of three, six, or twelve years, or, at the farthest until the year of Jubilee, during which term of service he received wages, like the daily hired servant, only less in amount.

CHAPTER VII.

SERVITUDE AMONG THE JEWS—STATUS OF ALIEN SERVANTS.

THE form of service which involves the chief and indeed the only difficulty is the supposed right of the Jews to enslave people of other nations.

The first warrant for this is drawn from Gen. ix. 25, 29 : “ Cursed be Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be unto his brethren. And he said, blessed be the Lord God of Shem, and Canaan shall be his servant.”

With reference to this passage we remark that, the most it affirms, is a mere prediction that the posterity of Canaan should hold a position subordinate and inferior to the posterity of Shem. It intimates no right of oppression.

But let us follow Dr. Hales in the history of these families.

“ Ham signifies burnt or black, and this name is significant of the regions allotted to his posterity. To the Cushites, or children of his eldest son Cush, were allotted the hot southern regions of Asia along the coasts of the Persian gulf, Arabia, &c. To the *Sons of Canaan*, Palestine and Syria. To the sons of Misraim, Egypt and Lybia in Africa. The Hamites in general, like the Canaanites of

old, were a seafaring race, and sooner arrived at civilization than did their simpler pastoral and agricultural brethren of the other two families.

“The first great empires of Assyria and Egypt were founded by them, and the republics of Sidon and Carthage, were early distinguished for their commerce, but they soon fell into decay, and Egypt, which was one of the first, became the last and basest of the kingdoms, (Ezek. xxix. 15,) and has been successively in subjection to the Shemites and Japhethites, as have also the settlements of the other branches of the Hamites.”

The truth of this view is sustained by the etymology of names. Ethiopia is often called Cush. Ethiopia however it is generally conceded was not the central part of Africa as now, but the southern part of Arabia. Again, the descendants of Canaan were marked by the name they took from their progenitor, Canaanites, and possessed parts of Palestine and Syria. This *fact* is plain enough from Gen. x: 19, where the position of the sons of Canaan is distinctly traced. “And the border of the Canaanites was from Sidon as thou comest to Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest unto Sodom, and Gomorrah, and Admah, and Zeboim, even unto Lasha.”

We do not question that the African race is an offshoot from the family of Ham. But it springs from Misraim rather than Canaan. The curse fell upon Canaan by name, doubtless because he was most involved in the guilt of Ham, while the other sons

were innocent. Toward himself it came as a fearfully fulfilled prediction in the extermination of his descendants. There is now no tribe or nation who can be pointed to as without question the descendants of Canaan. That the curse did not rest on Misraim is obvious from the fact that Israel herself was long and often subject to Egypt, and also many parts of Asia.

Where then is the warrant from this passage, for oppressing, above all for enslaving any people? And where in the name of reason is the right to lay our hand upon the inhabitants of Western Africa, and say these are by divine warrant accursed and may be enslaved, because forty-two centuries ago their progenitor was brother to a man upon whom rested a divine censure?

WARRANT FROM LEVITICUS CONSIDERED.

Another warrant for the right to enslave man is cited from the paragraph found in Lev. xxv. 44-46. It reads as follows:

“Both thy bondmen, and thy bondmaids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bondmen and bondmaids. Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land: and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession; they shall be your bond-

men for ever ; but over your brethren the children of Israel, ye shall not rule one over another with rigor."

I have quoted this formidable paragraph entire. Let us examine it in the light of fair exegesis, and in the light of other teaching in the Mosaic books.

1. And first as to the meaning of terms. The words here rendered bondmen and bondmaids, (*āvath*, from *āvath* and *āma*) do not bear *necessarily* the idea of slavery, as the word slave does with us. *Ama*, Gesenius translates "maid-servant or handmaid." This same word is used for *I*, spoken by a free woman to a superior, with the precise form and pointing here used as in Judges xix. 9 ; 1 Saml. i. 11, 16, 25, 26 ; 2 Saml. xiv. 15.

This use of the word shows that nothing degrading was connected with it, while the term, if it literally meant a slave, no free woman would feel at liberty to use even in reverence. The word *āvath* is the verb to work or labor, and *āvath* is simply a masculine noun derived from it as in English, workman from work. The primary meaning of the word is to labor, to be a laborer, and thence to be a servant.

The word is the common one for servant in the old Testament. In two instances it is used intensively, as in Gen. ix. 26. Canaan is "*āvath āvath*," a servant of servants. In the passage before us, and the parallel in Ex. xxi. 6, it is *āvath*

olaum, or servant forever. In all other instances I believe it is used without qualification to denote all forms of service.

There is another word "sākir," translated hire, which is sometimes applied to servants. But they are used interchangeably, and there is no clear distinction made between sakir and avath. Gesenius quotes references, which apply sakir to laborers, nurses, passage money, hire of a thing, stipend of priests, and wages of Jacob. Avath he finds used of soldiers, court officers, military commanders, of a people as tributary, of the people of God, and ambassadors of God, of hired servants as Jacob, and Jews serving six years, and of priests. So "hiring themselves out for bread," 1 Sam. ii. 5, denotes the poverty of the people, compelling them to engage in menial service for food. So Jacob being poor agrees to serve Laban seven years, as an avath, for Rachel, and seven more after the deception, in all doubtless twenty years. The share given him in cattle and flocks was his wages, changed ten times, yet favoring Jacob. Here is an āvath with sākir, under a long and twice renewed indenture, showing plainly, the voluntary relation of an avath, even under a long contract. Now it is remarkable, that this word so pure, and so destitute of the idea of property in every other use, should have it in this one instance. That it should as many hold, here mean a perpetual slave, a servant of servants. The

word is not intense enough. If the priest, the military officer, the soldier, the worshipper of God, was not a slave, nor the Hebrew servant, it is at least singular that in one solitary text it should bear this meaning. The word itself decides nothing. Do the qualifying phrases then, attach to it a meaning it does not in itself convey? The presumption is against this. In other places, the idea of involuntary and degrading service is excluded. It is a fair inference that it is not included here.

2. Again the word *cāna*—buy, does not imply purchase of a third party. Gesenius gives its primary meaning, as “to create, to found,” 2d “to get, to obtain, to *acquire*,” as a woman to wife, wisdom, truth, understanding, *conquest* of God’s holy mountain, *birth* of a son, to *redeem* or buy off, as land.

Applied to persons, he gives the following uses of the word :

To servants, Eccl. ii. 7, on which see page 58, *Note*.

To a Hebrew servant in six years’ indenture, Ex. xxi.

To redeem captives, Deut. xxviii. 68.

To redeem Hebrews bound to aliens, Neh. v. 8.

To oppress, or condemning persons to serve for petty debts, Amos. ii. 6.

To keep cattle, or engage for it, Zech. xiii. 5.

To be masters or shepherds, implying authority as priests, Zech. xi. 5.

Now in no one of these passages, and they are I believe all in which the word *cāna* is applied to persons, does the idea of property enter. Applied to servants, they rather denote an engagement between free persons : selling or indenturing ones'-self, except in case of *debt* or crime, when it was done by a magistrate, and then for only a brief period. The word therefore proves nothing in favor of slavery, but is adverse to such an idea, even excludes it. Get your servants of the heathen is the most that it affirms. The term buy, or acquire, or get, whatever rendering you give *cāna*, when applied to persons, must be interpreted according to the prevailing usage of the time when so used, which, as shown in a previous chapter and in the last paragraph, invariably meant to *buy of one'sself*, and not of a third party, save in the case of crime or of indentured children.

3. Again, the time term does not show either involuntary or perpetual service. The words "They shall be your bondmen forever," it is true seem to imply perpetuity and property in the relation. But the words are a parallel with those in Ex. xxi. 6, where if a Hebrew servant desired to remain with his master after the sixth year, the master took him before a magistrate, the contract or agreement for continued service was thus publicly made, the servant's ear was pierced with an

awl, and it is said, "He shall serve him (the master) forever." In each case the Hebrew is nearly the same, and they read literally, "He (the master) shall serve himself with him forever." Here it is, "Ye shall serve yourselves with them forever."

But the contract with the Hebrew servant, though thus renewed, was limited. At the year of Jubilee the man was free. The words of Scripture and the testimony of Josephus are so plain that no one can question the fact as regards the Hebrew service. If then the time term in one case means only a contract running at farthest to the year of Jubilee, it is a fair deduction that it bears the same limitation in reference to the other. They both apply to persons, and to persons bound to service. There is no express restriction in either case, and we must therefore define the time terms, as in both cases equivalent. It cannot mean forever in the sense of eternally, nor of all time. Death must end it, if nothing else. The word is therefore comparative. He shall serve you to the end of the contract, or to the year of Jubilee, which was an oft recurring year of death, to debt and bondage. But it is said, a contract for fifty years is virtually perpetual! No, for few persons could contract for so long a period. If 1860 had been with us a Jubilee, comparatively few of the blacks would have been in bondage more than five, ten or twenty years, especially if as with the Jews the long contract could be made

only by an adult, and such a blow to bond service, so frequently annihilating it, would soon crush it out.

4. But it says, "They shall be your possession an inheritance for your children after you." True, but this language must be interpreted not absolutely, but by the actual status and obligations of the service. It is expressly limited to an individual contract, by the words quoted above, "Ye shall serve *yourselves* and *your children* with them." Not observe, *they* and *their children* shall serve you, as would be required of perpetual slavery, but the reverse.

The force of the words is simply this. The master's death shall not end the contract. It shall belong to his family, his heirs, &c. It may require one, ten, or forty years service, at stipulated wages. It cannot be broken at the mere will of the servant, but is binding (while the master or heir fulfills his covenant) to the close of the period named in the contract, as a voluntary engagement, and becomes family property in so far as the mere service has a value.

5. Again, other words need notice. "Of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy (get, hire) and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land."

This language requires us to consider these strangers as persons voluntarily settling among

the children of Israel, or as remnants of tribes once holding possession of the land. They are not captives, nor criminals, but free and innocent residents in the land. As free persons they could become servants only by voluntary contract, or by constraint only as a penalty for crime. The passage gives no warrant for taking them by violence, and compelling menial service, and selling and holding them as slaves. Such injustice and inhumanity were a violation of every precept regulating Jewish intercourse with aliens. If it was not this crime, then it must have been a voluntary engagement for yearly service, under the same regulations and limitations that attached to the service of home or Hebrew born servants.

6. But it may be asked, Why is this command given?

It was not to sanction but to prohibit slavery. It was to prevent the Hebrews falling into the heathen form of slaveholding with all its attendant corruptions and horrors, and its entailment of bondage on generation after generation of their fellow men. It was a system of service indeed, but one so carefully limited and guarded and beset with restraint, that it must work its own cure, or in default of this, be completely annihilated every fifty years.

1. This fact is evident from the reproach attaching to such service. If a Hebrew purposed

to renew his contract after six years---and till the year of Jubilee, he did it under a virtual protest. It must be in the presence and with the sanction of a magistrate, and the servant must have his ear pierced, thus bearing through life, the heathen mark of a slave. The same law doubtless covered the service of an alien, and most persons would naturally shrink from bearing this mark of degradation,—and very few indenture themselves for a long period.

2. Again, the child did not follow the status of the parent—each contract being an individual and voluntary one, except in the brief indenture of children by parents. Hence the fruitful source of slavery was prohibited, in the impossibility of any man or woman perpetuating slavery in their seed.

Exception to this statement may be taken from the words in Ex. xxi. 4, where a specific reserve seems to be made in the instance where a master has given a wife to the servant, “The wife and her children shall be her master’s.” But the law applies to the six years’ service when the children would be young. The father’s term of service expires, the mother’s has not. It would be cruel to sever the children from the mother. They remain however the master’s only on the ground of kindness, and of an implied obligation in the consent of the master to the marriage. With married persons, the law treated them as one. They

went in and out together, with their children. To interpret this as proof of perpetual slavery, is to do so in violence to the context and to all the passages which speak of indentured service.

3. The civil and religious privileges given to the resident alien, were an express restriction upon involuntary servitude. The servants of a household were all to be circumcised, aliens as well as home born, and were thus engrafted into the Hebrew church. Deut. xxix. 10: Gen. xvii. 10.

“One law and one manner shall be for you and the stranger that sojourneth with you.” Num. xv. 16.

“The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Lev. xix. 34.

“Thou shalt not oppress the stranger for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Ex. xxiii. 9.

These passages place the stranger on an equal footing with the Hebrew, and bid them look to them as brethren to be taught in the ways of God—and incorporated with themselves into all the rights and privileges of the Jewish people. They were to remember Egypt, and impose no burden on the stranger which might even approximate the oppressions under which they themselves suffered in the house of bondage. Ye know how bitter is a constrained service, impose it therefore on none.

There is abundant ground for the opinion of Calmet, Horne, and others, that while the law of Lev. xxv. 39-43, refers immediately to Hebrew servants, it yet, with all the other restrictions, applied to all servants. The incorporation of aliens, the very frequency of intermarriage with servants—all attest it a true view, and the statute for the year of Jubilee confirms it, since there is hardly a question among learned men that it is to be taken literally, as “*proclaiming liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof, it shall be a jubilee unto you.*” Lev. xxv. 10.

The long periods of service, recognized by the Divine Being as lawful, we may add, had at first, a salutary influence. The country was in an unsettled state for many years after the Israelites took possession of Palestine. These contracts banded together in one household, many persons, and gave security to the families of master and servants, thus gradually absorbing the very element, which if left separate and hostile, would have remained a snare, dangerous to the security of Israel. Yet it was a system which as soon as society became secure and prosperous—must die out, from the growing reluctance of servants to contract for long periods in a service at the best, menial and restraining to individual freedom. Hence, as Scott remarks upon the passage, “It does not appear from the subsequent history, that the people availed themselves of this allowance to

any great extent for we read little of slaves from among the Gentiles possessed by them."

These facts narrow down the difficulty which be-sets the question of slavery, in relation to Biblical sanction. The statement of Scott as to the subsequent history, we shall examine in another chapter, and perhaps find confirmation for a broader statement, that we *never read of* slaves from among the Gentiles, possessed by Jews.

But another question.

Why this broad distinction between citizens and aliens?

This question is of primary importance, since it discloses the precise design of a command so often taken as a warrant for slavery, and if we can learn the design, we have a key to just interpretation.

This command to buy of the heathen, is preceded by a command carefully protecting the Israelites. "Thou shalt not rule over him with rigor." It closes with a like direction. "But over your brethren the children of Israel ye shall not rule one over another with rigor." Will any say this implies that Jews might rule with rigor over heathen? It does not follow that a command to love a wife implies hatred to everybody else. No more is rigor to a heathen implied. The words seem rather to imply that the bulk of service will be by Hebrews, and hence the need of this special guard,—other passages—

we shall quote interdict the rigorous treatment of the alien, and place him in the nearness of the Jews' own flesh, and yet with a peculiar dignity and favor to the Hebrew.

The children of Israel were God's chosen people. They were not to be oppressed, nor degraded. Keeping them poor and making them servants of all work, and in menial offices, hindered them in gaining that culture and elevation which God was seeking to work out. Hence the command to divide the soil equally among them, that each might be as far as possible independent, and the command to obtain servants for menial offices from the heathen, rather than from their own people. This explanation is not a devised one. The very distinction here commanded is made by both David and Solomon, in preparing to build the temple. Of all strangers in the land they levied a *tribute* of bond service. But of the children of Israel did Solomon make no bondsmen, but they were his men of war, his princes and captains, and rulers of his chariots and horses.* See 2 Chron. i. 17 ; 1 Kings v. 15.

* But King Solomon subdued the remnant of the Canaanites
 * * and ordered them to pay tribute. He also chose out of them every year such as were to serve him in the meanest offices and do his domestic work, and follow husbandry, for none of the Hebrews were servants (in such low employments) nor was it reasonable that when God had brought so many nations under their power, they should depress their own people to such mean offices of life, rather than those natives ; but all the Israelites were concerned in warlike offices, and were in armor, and were set over the chariots and the horses, rather than leading the life of slaves.—JOSEPHUS' *Ant.*, book viii., chap. 6, sec. 3.

These passages indicate clearly the distinction made in the service. Aliens were to do the servile work. Even in public enterprises were to provide levies of men, while the children of Israel were to hold the places of honor and trust. It is because of this distinction that we never hear of strangers in Judea being advanced to positions of honor and eminence or being employed in high stations, as was Joseph in Egypt, Daniel in Babylon, &c.

In concluding the examination of this supposed warrant for slavery, we may remark, that the passage cannot be fairly interpreted as inaugurating or sanctioning or regulating a system of slavery. The true view of it is the reverse of this, as a direction for keeping it out of Israel—for restraining, prohibiting, killing, all forms of service that might approximate to slavery.

The contract service was indeed liable to abuse, and favored oppression--yet this was prohibited. The servant had equal civil rights. He could appeal to the judges, and the smallest injury, the loss of an eye or a tooth, by the hand of the master, freed him from his contract, and if ill used he fled, he could not be returned.

This passage is the stronghold of those who insist upon a scriptural warrant for slavery.

The criticism just made we believe to be a just one, and that it sets forth its true "meaning and intent." If we knew that in after ages the Jews

actually held domestic slaves, we could not justly turn to this as a warrant. That system of individual and voluntary contract—though running long, was essentially different from slavery. The servant was still a citizen—and a person who could not be bought or sold without consent. His children were free, and he had all the civil and religious rights of the master. This is not Slavery. It is not the dimmest shadow of that American system which has become so colossal, and so fearful in its aspects for the future peace of the South. This is designed to abide forever. That bore in itself, a law of extinction. This clings to life amid wrong and ruin. That made haste to die. This is of wicked men. That of a merciful and compassionate God.

CHAPTER VIII.

PRECEPTIVE CONFIRMATION.

THERE is a clause in the Constitution of the United States declaring that persons held to service in one State, fleeing to another, shall be delivered up. Suppose, four thousand years hence, after the government has long disappeared, and changes of which our dreams give no foreshadowing have come upon the continent, that some solitary student should be arrested by the words of the clause, and ask to what they referred. Unquestionably, his first impression would be that they referred to fugitive apprentices and indentured clerks. If, then, some friend should question this, and affirm that they referred to slavery, the question of interpretation would only be satisfactorily settled by referring to the history of the nation. If that history disclosed the fact of slavery existing when the Constitution was formed, then the presumption would be convincing that the clause referred to slavery. If there were no slavery, then, of course, the first impression would be confirmed, and the question settled.

Such an appeal I propose to make in reference to this great warrant in Leviticus. There are two

parties ; one interprets it as meaning slavery ; others as meaning freedom, or at least as a service radically different from slavery. The history of the Jews must confirm or set aside the view I have taken.

Now, in reading the Mosaic books with the thought of aliens as slaves in mind, we are arrested by numerous precepts, enforcing an exercise of kindness and love towards them, forbidding to oppress, and so strongly worded as to forbid the idea of their being slaves ; they do not suggest a relation giving, in its nature, temptation and power to distress them, but are indiscriminate ; just such precepts as Christianity would have dictated to settlers in the American colonies to govern their treatment alike of Indians and fresh emigrants of whatever race.

“Thou shalt neither vex the stranger, nor oppress him.” Ex. xxii. 21.

“Love ye, therefore, the stranger, for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Deut. x. 19.

“The stranger that dwelleth with you shall be as one born among you, and thou shalt love him as thyself.” Lev. xix. 34.

“Thou shalt not oppress the stranger, for ye know the heart of a stranger, seeing ye were strangers in the land of Egypt.” Ex. xxiii. 9.

“One law and one manner shall be for you and for the stranger that sojourneth with you.” Num. xv. 16.

It would be easy to multiply such citations, but these are sufficient. They show that while the Mosaic law sought to convey to the Jews the highest sense of personal dignity, and thus to elevate them, it yet enforces the kindest charity and the most cordial love towards those of other nations. To beget royalty of feeling, and yet the largest beneficence ; to make them kingly men, as the chosen of God, and a peculiar people, yet men without arrogance ; kingly not in bearing and power, so much as in all divine virtues ; this was the great design.

But these passages are suggestive of other facts.

1. "Not to vex or oppress the stranger," forbids his being made a slave.

2. "As one born among you," interdicts his being treated with the contempt which would result necessarily if he were a slave.

3. "Love him as thyself," prohibits utterly his being bought, sold, and tasked as a slave.

4. "Ye were strangers in Egypt." What is the intimation conveyed in this appeal to their history? In Egypt ye were oppressed ; ye felt the hand of the taskmaster ; ye know how bitter and grinding is a constrained service ; therefore, impose it not on the strangers who dwell among you. Is not this its meaning? Use them better than you were used in Egypt ; lay upon them no such burdens, or tasks, or stripes.

5. "One law and one manner." Does this in-

timate the distinction of master and slave? Could it be regarded, and involuntary servitude exist? or do not all these commands forbid the relation of master, or of property in man?

THE FUGITIVE SLAVE LAW.

6. The following passage is also suggestive :

“Thou shalt not deliver unto his master the servant which is escaped from his master unto thee. He shall dwell with thee, even among you, in that place which he shall choose, in one of thy gates where it liketh him best. Thou shalt not oppress him.” Deut. xxiii. 15, 16.

This law bears no limitation. In its phraseology it applies to any oppressed and injured servant who may have fled from his master. Commentators commonly refer it to fugitives from other nations, which is doubtless correct. But it strikes at the root of slavery; it gives the heathen servant of a heathen master *the right, if by flight even he may be free*, to use it rather; it forbids the Jewish people to return him; it commands them to receive, and feed, and aid him; it forbids the Jews to recognize the right of property in man, even among other nations, by preventing any compact with them for the return of fugitives held to service; it makes Palestine a great city of refuge for the oppressed of all nations. By this law the slave ceased to be a slave the moment

his feet touched Jewish soil, and it threw around him the shield of Divine protection.

STATUTE FOR THE YEAR OF JUBILEE.

The statute for the year of Jubilee is as strongly confirmatory.

“Ye shall hallow the fiftieth year and proclaim liberty throughout all the land, unto all the inhabitants thereof, it shall be a jubilee unto you. Lev. xxv. 10.

The year of Jubilee was typical of the Gospel dispensation. It cancelled all debts. It returned the alienated field. It ended the contract with every laborer whether homeborn or alien. The restriction of its manumission to a class is unwarranted by the passage announcing the release; and the typical character of the Jubilee is marred and narrowed down, if such limitation be attached.* Comp. Isa. lxi. 1, 2; Luke iv. 8, 9.

* There is only one instance of the word forever in connection with property, meaning perpetual. It is the case of a city lot or dwelling house being sold, and unredeemed for a full year. “It shall be the buyer’s throughout all generations, it shall not go out in the Jubilee.” Lev. xxv. 30. There is no such exception in the case of other property in real estate, and there is no such exception in the case of alien servants. The general rule covers all cases, not expressly excepted, and the view of it as limited, is false to the text, and the typical character of the provision, to the case ruled in the context, and to the entire teaching of the Mosaic books, in reference to the position and treatment to be given aliens.

“The motive of this law (for the Jubilee.) was to prevent the rich from oppressing the poor and reducing them to perpetual servitude, and that they should not get possession of all the lands by way of purchase, mortgage, or lastly, usurpation.

We may add that the passage from Josephus bearing on the year of Jubilee plainly implies that there was *no form of involuntary servitude* among the Jews, save that which was imposed as a punishment for crime ; as in theft when the criminal was unable to make the fourfold restitution required by the Mosaic law. "The fiftieth year is called by the Hebrews the Jubilee, wherein debtors are freed from their debts and slaves are set at liberty, which slaves became such by transgressing some of those laws, the punishment of which was not capital, but they were punished by this method of slavery." Ant. B. 7, Chap. 2.

THE LAW *vs.* MANSTEALING.

There is a farther and decisive confirmation of the unlawfulness of slavery among the Jews, found in the general statute recorded in Ex. xxi. 16.

"He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand he shall surely be put to death."

On this passage Scott says, "the assertion that this law refers like Deut. xxiv. 7, to a stolen Hebrew is by no means consistent with the text, which certainly implies that he who stole any one of the human species in order to make a slave of him, should be punished with death."

That debts should not be multiplied too much, lest thereby the poor should be entirely ruined, and that *servants* should not continue always they and their wives and children in servitude."
—CALMET.

The substance of the command is given by Josephus, in this forcible and unrestricted sentence. "Let death be the penalty for stealing a man."* Ant. B. 4, Chap. 8, Sec. 27.

Now here are three crimes specified as involving capital punishment: *stealing*, *selling* or *holding* man as a slave. The man may have passed through many hands from the first kidnapper who deprived him of freedom, yet the man who held him as a slave was equally guilty with the first wrong doer. The receiver of stolen property, if he knew it stolen, is, by common law, a partner in the crime and guilt of the theft. The statute bears no restriction. It can be limited by neither race or complexion or social condition. It cleaves away every pretext of right or of divine sanction, in enslaving a fellow man. I do not see how any person holding a fellow man as a slave—especially one who buys and sells them—can read this enactment of Jehovah without feeling that it rebukes his sin—and upbraids him with a violation of the divine law. It stands not only unrepealed—but is reaffirmed as a crime in the New Testament. See chap. xiii. Take now the supposed sanction of Genesis and Leviticus, which we have examined,

* "They who make war for the inhuman purpose of selling the vanquished for slaves, as is practiced among African princes, are really *men-stealers*, and they who like African traders, encourage the unchristian traffic by purchasing that which they know to be thus unjustly acquired, are partakers in their crimes."—MACKNIGHT.

and see, if in the light of this authoritative word, all semblance to a sanction for enslaving man is not at once burned out of them.*

The Levitical Law is often reproached as the relic of a dark and cruel age, and a stain upon the revelation of God. The charge arises from ignorance. That code of laws, studied in view of national character and position, and the surrounding paganism, beams with a wisdom, a humanity, a beneficence without parallel in the history of nations, and only equalled or exceeded by its own completion in the Gospel of Christ.

* "He that steals a man, woman or child, with design to sell them to the Gentiles, (no Israelite would buy them,) was adjudged to death by this statute; which is ratified by the apostle, 1 Tim. i. 10, where *men-stealers* are reckoned among those wicked ones, against whom laws must be made by Christian princes."—M. HENRY.

"'He that stealeth a man.' By this law, every man-stealer and every receiver of the stolen person should lose his life; no matter whether the latter stole the man himself or gave money to a *slave-captain*, or *negro-dealer* to steal him, for him."—A. CLARK.

CHAPTER IX.

HISTORICAL CONFIRMATION.

THERE is a remaining task which is important. This is, to examine the history of the Jews subsequent to the giving of these laws, to inquire after any traces of service, to study the character of that service, to learn whether, if any form of slavery existed, it were according or opposed to the Divine will.

What, then, does their history say ?

The first instance of servitude recorded as imposed upon aliens is that of the Gibeonites. The whole account is given in Josh. ix.

1. Sparing the lives of the Gibeonites is expressly stated to have been a violation of the Divine command. The instance hence affords no sanction of slavery, save in making a people *tributary, in violation* of an express command of God.

2. But the service here required was a voluntary one. To save their lives they deceived Joshua, and were condemned to become hewers of wood and drawers of water to the house of God. Rather they submitted to this, becoming dependents of Israel, to secure their lives and future protection. In the service appointed, but few of

them could be engaged at once. The rest of them dwelt in their own cities, one of which is called a "royal one." No service was required of their wives or daughters, and all that was rendered was an occasional tribute of service for the privilege of protection.

3. In Deut. xx. 14 we have a law recorded for the disposition of captives. The children of Israel were commanded, in laying waste conquered cities, to smite every male with the sword; but the women and the little ones, and the cattle and property they were to take for themselves. This law refers to distant nations. Virgin women and children were taken—the women for wives—and were, with the children, to be cultured to a knowledge of the true God. These *only* were spared, as those least likely to introduce idolatry, and most readily incorporated among the Jewish people.

The command in reference to the nations of Palestine, corrupt above all other nations, was, "Thou shalt save alive nothing which breatheth; but thou shalt utterly destroy them. Deut. xx. 16, 17.

No slaves could ever be taken from these nations. The principle, made the strongest plea for enslaving men, in the right of conquerors over captives taken in war, is not recognized in this command. It cuts off the chief and most plausible form of acquiring slave property. Josephus gives, B. 4, 8, 42, an interpretation of these laws more

in accordance with Joshua's actual course—an interpretation not far, probably from the truth—and making them less sanguinary than we commonly deem them. “When you have beaten your enemies in battle, slay those who have fought against you ; but preserve the others alive, *that they may pay you tribute*, excepting the Canaanites, for, as to that people, you must entirely destroy them.”

The disposition made of captive women and children is explained in Deut. xxi. 10, 11. The women became wives and half wives to the children of Israel, and the treatment they received was eminently humane and beneficent. They, with their little ones, were thus incorporated with the chosen people, and led to the salvation of God.

4. In 2d Sam. xii. 31, there is an account of the disposition made of certain captives. Some were slain, and the remnant made to saw wood and stone, dig iron, and labor about furnaces. There is no intimation of their becoming slaves to individuals, but only like the Gibeonites, being compelled to pay tribute of service, or to send levies of men, from time to time, to do the heavy drudgery of the public service, instead of imposing it upon the poor of the children of Israel.

5. The same requirement is made 1st Kings ix. 21, and also in 1st Chron. xxii. 2. All these in-

stances are alike a tribute of service by subdued tribes.

6. In 2d Chron. i. 17, 18, and 1st Kings v. 13-18, a case already referred to, we have an illustration of actual bond-service, and the real status of the alien. The strangers in the land were numbered by David. From them he drew levies of men to execute the work preparatory to the building of the temple. The same thing is done by Solomon. The men thus levied are called *bond-men*, and the service *bond-service*, yet the levy only required that they should give an alternate third of the time, until the completion of the work. One month they labored on the public work, and two remained at home ; and no exaction is made of wives and daughters.

In no one of these instances is there an intimation of slavery, or of a constrained service, beyond this brief tribute. There are other references to service in the historic books, but not one of them conveys an idea of chattelship in man. They refer to subordinate priests, to officers, to hired servants and contract ones. The principal references are the following, which the reader may consult at his leisure : 1 Sam. ix. 22 ; 2 Sam. ix. 9-12 ; Job xxxi. 13, 38, 39 ; xli. 5 ; Neh. iv. 16, and xi. 3 ; 1 Chron. ii. 34, 35.

CHAPTER X.

TESTIMONY OF PROPHETS.

“Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke?” Isa. lviii. 6.

JEREMIAH.

THIS testimony is important. The prophets were sent to rebuke oppression and violence among the people of God in all its forms. They speak as from the mouth of God, and it becomes us to weigh well their testimony.

In Jer. xxxiv. 13-18, we have an alarming accusation. (See Passage.) But observe that severe as this passage is, it refers solely to an abuse of the contract system among Hebrews. The poor of the children of Israel were oppressed. Grasping men took advantage of their poverty, to keep them servants after the term of service had expired, and after a solemn covenant to free them. selves of this iniquity.

But if they did this thing in a “green tree,” and toward brethren, how fearful must have been the cruelties toward strangers, if such were servants to any extent? The fact that no oppression toward strangers is mentioned, is therefore conclusive evidence, that aliens were not then taken and held even as contract servants, at least not to an extent

to become an observable evil. If there were many of them servants : the greed so oppressive toward Hebrews, must have been more exacting toward them, and that God so beneficent toward the stranger, could not have withheld a rebuke of the iniquity.

It is but a repetition of the wrong mentioned in Neh. v. 5, where complaint is made that in consequence of a dearth many of the children of Israel were compelled to sell themselves and their lands to usurers. Yet to buy them under such circumstances was a sin, and the iniquity of the usurers was promptly rebuked and the wrong ended. The case in Jer. seems to have had a similar occasion, and it met the same reprobation.

EZEKIEL.

In Ezek. xxii. 29, the oppression of the stranger is expressly stated as an occasion of denunciation. "The people of the land have used oppression, and exercised robbery, and have vexed the poor and needy : yea, they have oppressed the stranger wrongfully."

The reprobation here pronounced must have been given wherever such a sin called for it. But even here it is not implied that these strangers were slaves, but rather that *Judges and Landlords* made the stranger a prey ; using unjustly, exacting bribes and otherwise ill treating. See *in loco* Scott, Henry, Pool and Clark.

AMOS.

In Amos ii. 6, the crime of having "sold the righteous for silver, and the poor for a pair of shoes," is represented as occasion for wrath, yet this is but a picture of bribery and malfeasance in the courts of justice, showing favor to the rich, and being merciless and unpitying to the poor, and does not allude to aliens as slaves.

EZEKIEL.

"Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants : they traded the persons of men and vessels of brass in thy market." Ezek. xxvii. 13. These words are part of a statement of the resources and extensive commerce, which had become the pride of Tyre the great commercial metropolis of the known world at that time ; she traded with all nations, and the chapter narrates the productions of each nation, or the character of its merchandise. This verse speaks of Tyre as a slave mart, and shows that the supply of slaves came chiefly from the regions about the Caspian sea. Verse 17 is also significant : "Judah, and the land of Israel, they were thy merchants : they traded in thy market wheat of Minnith, and Pannag, and honey, and oil, and balm." This passage plainly excludes Israel from the slave traffic, while the other discloses one of the occasions of the curse of Tyre in the debauchery, and uncleanness, which had spread with her prosperity,

leading her to the purchase of slaves for the gratification of her enervating vices. We learn that the children of Israel were free from this iniquity. If they bought, or sold, or in any way trafficked in human flesh, it must have been mentioned in an account so minute and truthful as this obviously is. They were guilty enough of sin doubtless, but from this criminal and atrocious traffic in the bodies and souls of their fellow men, the prophet exculpates them entirely.

MALACHI.

“I will come near to you in judgment, and will be a swift witness against * * * those who oppress the hireling in his wages, and that turn aside the stranger from his right.” Mal. iii. 5.

We have here an enumeration of the sins for which God will draw near in judgment upon Israel. I have given only the pertinent points, but the enumeration includes, 1st, “sorcerers;” 2d, “adulterers;” 3d, “false swearers;” 4th, “oppressing the hireling in his wages;” 5th, “oppressing the widow and the fatherless;” 6th, “turning aside the stranger from his right;” and thus “fearing not me, saith the Lord of Hosts.”

The passage is from the prophecy which closes the canon of the Old Testament. It discloses a lamentable wickedness. It declares the bulk of the nation corrupt—just the state of society where we should be most likely to find slavery intro-

duced, with all its attendant evils, even those to which it so largely contributed in heathen lands. But there is no intimation of the existence of such an institution ; the wrongs, and abuses, grew out of a voluntary and contract service ; the alien and the Hebrew, both have place in God's tender regard. It is impossible to believe that the Great Father could denounce so severely abuses which, at worst, must be light in such a system of service, compared with the relation of master and slave, and yet be utterly silent in reference to the worse evil, if such an evil existed, especially when involving evils that are ever and everywhere its attendants, and are crimes and shameful sins by His own divine law.

JOEL.

“ And they have cast lots for my people, and have given a boy for a harlot, and sold a girl for wine, that they might drink. The children also of Judah and the children of Jerusalem have ye sold unto the Grecians, that ye might remove them far from their border.” Joel, iii. 3, 6.

There is much disagreement as to the application of this prophecy. “ In those days,” according to the preceding prophecy, should refer to gospel times. But the precise subject and time are not important, for they set forth certain acts in condemnatory language, and what those condemned acts were is the point of importance in this discussion.

1. They plainly predict the sale of Jewish captives in some subsequent war or wars.

2. That these captives are sold purposely for slaves.

3. They were sold to a distant people, in order to reduce them to irredeemable and hopeless bondage.

4. An aggravated feature of this traffic was its making merchandize of the children of God.

5. While God predicts, by the prophet, that this offence will come, he yet declares it wicked, and adds that he will raise or return them out of the place of bondage, and *recompense the sin* of those who sold them.

6. It unfolds, as a general truth in the providence of God, that while he may *suffer and predict* the occurrence of wrong, this fact does not mitigate at all the guilt of the wrongdoer.

7. If it was a crime *then* to remove from their own land, and to sell a people—a crime bearing a denunciation reaching on to the very times of the Gospel ; then it is a crime now to sell a people, or remove them from their own land in order to enslave them.

8. The passage finds a literal fulfilment in African slavery. The slaves are removed by violence from their own land, and reduced to helpless slavery, and the scene is of daily occurrence in southern slave marts, that a believer in God, a member of the flock of Christ, is bought

and sold. The words are not only a virtual, but an express condemnation of involuntary servitude, given from the mouth of Jehovah. They re-affirm truths set forth in many passages, yet with more directness of bearing upon slavery, since here it is named—in them only included by the sweep of a principle. Of this class are the passages following :

“ Rob not the poor because he is poor, neither oppress the afflicted in the gate (the stranger), for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.” Prov. xxii. 22.

“ Woe unto him that buildeth his house by unrighteousness, and his chambers by wrong ; that useth his neighbor’s services without wages, and giveth him not for his work.” Jer. xxii. 13.

In these passages we have a very different view of slavery from that which regards it right and of divine appointment.

The passages which refer, in the prophecies, to the sins of Israel, are levelled at abuses of the contract system, the oppressions of those who were servants, defrauding them of their wages, and otherwise ill-treating them. Other prophecies clearly prophetic, recognize slavery indeed as existing among other nations, and predict it, but ever as a crime, involving visitations of God in judgment for the sin. They always speak of it as attended by gross and flagrant crimes ; not only injustice, and fraud, and impiety, but, to an amaz-

ing extent, by lewdness and intemperance. The picture outlines, as with light, the state of the South, where slavery has wrought its legitimate work, and where all these sins literally abound, creeping, with a debauching influence, into the very church of Christ. Nor may we spare the truth, now current in college circles, that the debauchery is not overcome by removal to a temperate zone, and that the spread of impurity at the North is to be attributed, largely at least, to chattel slavery and its influence over whites. The extent to which it has demoralized political integrity—the journals of the day—proclaim not always with a spirit forbidding the suspicion of a debauched literature.

CHAPTER XI.

FINAL QUESTION.

WE now raise the last question on the teaching of the Old Testament. We raise it however in order to present at one view a summary of the preceding argument, and not as entirely distinct.

The question is this.

Is there any evidence of any such a system as involuntary servitude ever existing among the Jews? Observe it is not a question as to service for crime, and contract and wages. But was there such a system of personal property in man, as is now recognized under the general term slavery?

The history of the Jewish people is given with great minuteness. It can be traced clearly from Abram down to Malachi, only four hundred years before the coming of our Lord, and profane history is quite full in regard to the remaining period.

The histories of other nations are full of allusions to slavery. The Helots of Greece are often mentioned. Their number and condition is given as necessary to a faithful chronicle. So in the histories of Egypt and Rome. Among all these nations we can trace the rise, the abuses and the

results of the system. Regulations and laws are recorded. Details of wrongs suffered by the slaves and of insurrection are given. Instances of eminence acquired by individuals are stated, whose slave descent is recorded as essential to faithful biography. There are fragments of poems and whole dramas founded on the relation. So of our own history. The history of slavery forms an essential part of it, important for understanding treaties and laws, and usages in society.

A faithful history could not be written of any state or even church, where slavery had ever existed, without more or less frequently referring to such a class.

The fact that other nations held slaves is often regarded as evidence that the Jews did the same. But it does not follow. History affirms the fact of them. It has no affirmation here, as we shall show.

Observe as militating against such a view the following facts.

1. Israel though wealthy and numerous in Egypt, and forming a distinct people, in coming out brought with them no slaves. Ex. xii. 37.

2. In the return of victors, there is no mention of captives who were reduced to slavery. See Gen. xiv. 1-21 ; Judges xi. 33 ; 1 Sam. xv. 15 ; 2 Chron. xx. 25, 28 ; and xiv. 15.

3. In the division of spoil after successful conflicts, there is no mention of a division of captives

as slaves, the only case approximating it, being of virgin women as wives. Judges xxi. 12 ; Num. xxxi. 17 ; 1 Sam. xxx. 20 ; Deut. xx. 14.

4. In the census of the people by Moses, (Num. i.,) by David, (2 Sam. xxiv.,) and (1 Chron. xxi.,) there is no mention of slaves.

5. In mentioning the wealth of individuals, there is no mention of servants as included. See Gen. xiii. 21—the wealth of Abram. Gen. xxxiv. 23, and xxxi. 18–43—that of Jacob ; of Solomon, 1 Kings, x. ; of Job, i. 3, and xlii. 12 ; of Hezekiah, 2 Chron. xxxii. 27.

6. In bestowing valuable presents, there is no mention of slaves as gifts. See the present of Jacob to Esau, Gen. xxxii. 14 ; that of the Queen of Sheba to Solomon, 1 Kings x. ; of Solomon in return, the same chapter ; that of Benhadad to Elisha, 2 Kings, viii. 9, and of the Philistines to Jehoshaphat, 2 Chron. xvii. 11.

7. In all the instances of invasion and pillage by other nations, there is no mention of the existence of slaves. 2 Kings, vii., xv. 29 ; xvii. 6 ; 1 Kings xx. 5, and 2 Chron. xxxvi. 7.

8. No slave mart or slave traffic is mentioned as existing in Judea, as was the case in Babylon, in Tyre, and other great cities.

9. The denunciations of the prophets so far as they relate to the Jews, were all levelled at abuses of the voluntary system of service, and never intimate the lawfulness or existence of any other form.

10. There is an example of express reproof by a prophet of God, for the design of a few Israelites to enslave captives, and they are sent back clothed and provisioned with all their spoil. See 2 Chron. xxviii.

11. The express limitation of service even by contract to six years for a first engagement, the public form of renewing it, to which was attached a mark of ignominy in the bored ears, the heathen marks for a slave, are laws which mark a purpose to restrain and keep out servitude, rather than sanction it.

12. The status of the alien, as a sojourner to be treated not only kindly, and with mercy and love, but as under "the same law and manner," whom Israel was commanded to consider a subject for instruction in the knowledge of God, and to make him a sharer in all her blessings, shows that salvation, and mental and moral culture—not slavery—was what God purposed for him.

13. The statute for the manumission of all persons bound to service at the year of jubilee is so absolute and general, ending the service—for whatever period it may have run—that it plainly shows the policy and purpose of Mosaic laws to be the prohibition of slavery.

14. The statute against stealing, selling, or holding man as a slave, positively interdicts the existence of slavery.

15. There are no passages in the Old Testament

referring to service which are not more fully and fairly interpreted by referring them to a contract service, than they can be by referring them to involuntary and perpetual slavery.

16. There is no intimation; either by statement or censure, for wrongs growing out of the relation in all the history of the Jews, as given in the word of God and by Josephus, that the Jews ever held men as chattels, or that they possessed, in any other sense than by voluntary contract, the right of property in the services of a fellow man.

A man is not to be pronounced guilty of crime in the absence of evidence of its commission, nor are we justified in presuming the existence of slavery among a people without proof. So far from committing the Jews on suspicion, the presumption should be for acquittal, since their civil and social and religious polity was, in almost every respect, *diametrically opposite* to that of heathen nations.

The facts to which we have referred are such as seem invincible. I do not see how we can possibly reach, in face of them, a conclusion that they held slaves. Every one of these facts militate so clearly against such a hypothesis, that the very opposite is demonstrable by the word of God.

We submit the argument to the candor, the judgment and conscience of the reader, with entire confidence, believing he must feel that the Old Testament so far from sanctioning slavery, presents

no example of such a system, no commendation of it, but rather does plainly and unmistakably reprobate not only the traffic in, but the holding of our fellow men in bondage.

It would seem that the Jews had regarded one statute of Jehovah ; that amid all the temptations and facilities for such a traffic, (especially in the splendid commercial enterprises of the times of David and Solomon and Hezekiah,) they had felt the pressure and the power of that first Divine ordinance, and had never ventured to transgress a statute so unmistakable in its meaning, so retributive in its immediate penalty of death. Individuals, it is true, might, in corrupt times, have trafficked in human flesh, as with stolen goods, but this is an exceptional case, and must have been wrought covertly, and to a very limited extent. There is no evidence of their stealing, or selling, or holding a fellow man as a slave. Elaborate and minute as is the history of Josephus, it contains no allusion to slavery, no recognition of such a system among the Jews as involuntary servitude. Complete and full as are the books of the Old Testament in pictures of domestic life, and civil polity, and individual relations, there is never a recognition of the relation of master and slave.

CHAPTER XII.

TEACHING OF OUR LORD.

OUR Lord is declared to be "a teacher come from God," and as the Son of God is set forth as the equal of the Father in authority, it becomes us therefore to hear him, and to take the principles and precepts he has laid down as an authoritative test of the Christian lawfulness of any system.

It is proper to call attention just here to a fact readily recognized by any one familiar with the gospels, that our Lord does not, in his teaching, give specific rules so much as general principles.

Take the sermon on the mount. General principles of human conduct are here laid down in precept and in parable. But he never stops to give them application, save to correct erroneous teaching by the Scribes and Pharisees, as on the nature of an oath, the law of divorce, fasts, prayer, &c. : forms of worship, specific religious acts, dress, employment, conversation and conduct ; all these are to be governed by the individual conscience, itself judging of its course, and determining its rightfulness by an application of the principles our Lord lays down as the foundation of religious life.

In like manner, though directly questioned, he does not decide on the lawfulness of the reign of Cæsar, yet he gives a principle covering the question, which, without conflict with civil authority, enabled every conscience to act wisely and rightly.

He rebukes sin indeed, but only so far as it came within the sphere of his personal mission, which over and over again is represented as solely "to his own" or to the Jewish people. Not a word is said, not a crime specified, not a wrong named, with reference to foreign nations, or even to Roman officers dwelling in Judea. He never names idolatry, for the simple reason that he never meets it save in the form of devotion to Mammon. He does not take up the question of polygamy, because the sin is not there to rebuke. For precisely the same reason he does not speak of or against slavery. It would be a crusade against an imaginary evil. *Expediency*—a word, indeed, abused in this relation—does not, though abused, explain his silence. No man or class of men *with whom he came in contact*, but felt his rebuke of sins of which they were guilty; and it is only *in so far* that there is, or that we could expect to hear, specification of particular sins.

There is positively no evidence of slavery existing among his own people in the time of our Lord. All classes came to John, the stern forerunner, yet he never speaks of master and slave. All classes came to our Lord, yet he never hints of the rela-

tion. The burden of proof, therefore, lies on the advocates of slavery. They must first prove its legal and actual existence. They must then prove that his silence is a virtual endorsement of the relation, a task not difficult when the fact of slavery is proved. If it was there in its proper sense, with its inheritance of degradation and its attendant evils, unrebuked by our Lord, then slavery is not a crime. But observe that, to cite instances of slaves held by Roman officers, is evading the question. They were *not* "his own people," hence his silence as to their idolatry and slavery. Nor will it avail to cite the word *doulos*. This word, in earlier Greek, doubtless often denoted a slave, as well as andrapodiston. But in later Greek it gives place as the generic word for property in man, to andrapodiston, and takes on the more general meaning of *servant*, of whatever kind. In the gospels it *never* has the signification of slave. It is always used of a free service. Compare references in any concordance under the term *servant*, which is, I believe, invariably a rendering for *doulos*, and the dullest mind will see the statement true. It is used in New Testament Greek with precisely the general meaning of the word *servant* in English. The centurion's servant illustrates this; for, though a *doulos* in one gospel, he is in another *o pais auton*, the child or boy, and the terms and the narrative as well

exclude rather than admit the idea of property in him.

It is very true that slavery existed in other and neighboring nations, but the utter silence of the gospels in all their precepts and parables and pictures of domestic life, and the like silence of profane history, is conclusive evidence that slavery did not exist. This fact explains beyond controversy, the seeming silence of John and our Lord, and the apostles, in reference to such a sin among the Jewish people. It was not there to condemn, and this was the best reason in the world for not condemning it, unless Christ should contend with men of straw rather than with living guilt.

The question then turns on the point, whether the precepts and principles which our Lord laid down will, in a fair interpretation and application, bear upon the system for or against.

That his principles are antagonistic to slavery will, we think, be found beyond question.

He re-affirms the moral teaching and precepts of the law and the prophets. Matt. v. 17.

We have shown the bearing of both these parts of the Old Testament as being openly opposed to enslaving man. The great statute against stealing, selling, or holding man as a slave, does not come under the head of abrogated laws; the crime remains—the principle on which it is based—the equality of all men in essential rights—is still a principle. If it was wrong to make man a slave

when God spake by Moses, no less is it wrong when God speaks by his Son. If it was a crime condemned by him at the mouth of Oded, Joel, yea, all the prophets, it is still a crime which He must condemn. The law of Moses and the prophecies guard the children of Israel especially and repeatedly against idolatry, and fornication, and oppression, these three being the prevailing sins of the heathen, into which Israel was most liable to fall. In re-affirming the law, our Lord does not omit either, but includes each and all.

Take, also, the bearing of the royal law—

“Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.”—
Lev. xix. 18 ; and Matt. xix. 19, xxii. 39.

This law our Lord gives as containing the sum of human duty in relation to our fellow men. It places all men on a social and civil equality. It makes it fundamental in the life of good men “to do good to all men as they have opportunity,” and to elevate them, as near as possible, to the level we ourselves occupy. Man cannot love his neighbor as himself and seek less than this. It breaks in even upon conventional distinctions, forbidding that we should seek riches, or honor, or anything, at a neighbor’s expense ; not, indeed, interdicting the relation of rich and poor, honored and un-honored ; yet, so far as essential personal good is involved, to man, *as man*, does it bind us, to seek

his purity, and culture, and elevation, as of our own flesh.

But slavery does not attempt this. It dare not allow such an elevation of the slave, since it would be at once fatal to the permanence and security of the relation. The system is hence abhorrent to this rule and cannot abide its bearing.

Again, take what is called the golden rule,—

“Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them, for this is the law and the prophets.” Matt. vii. 12.

The common explanation of this rule is the only comment it requires. Whatsoever, in like circumstances, ye would have men do to you, do ye even so to them.

Suppose, now, its application in the relation of master and slave. The master, were he held as property, would desire a release from so degrading a relation; he would feel, and justly, that he ought to be his own master. Can the master then stand before this law uncondemned?

Or, suppose an extreme case, when the master is gentle, and the slave ignorant and well-fed, and easy worked, becomes contented with his lot. Now, this very contentment shows an obliteration of the man in his high, free aspirations, and in so far as it prevails, a predominance of the animal over the intellectual and moral. Does such a fact mitigate, or really does it not aggravate the sin

of his condition? And do not the precepts of our Lord, given as the sum of the law, demand the culture of this degraded slave till human sympathies and hopes fit him for freedom, and awaken the desire for it, and then that the master break the chain?

The law does not forbid merely the oppressive task, the unjust stripe, the stinted food, the denied mental culture, the divulsion of families. It cleaves down through all these accidents of the relation. If a man would not willingly be a slave; if he would feel that no man, by any pretence, could assume the relation of master to himself, and satisfy him of the justice of the relation; if he would feel himself degraded and wronged by the condition, even when ground down into the abjectness of contentment with the lot, he has no right to hold a fellow man in that relation.

But it may be said that this rule cannot be pressed so far as to require the manumission of slaves, since thus unjust to the master, involving, on his part, a great pecuniary loss. I answer—loss in yielding a wrong can never be a just consideration; it is a part of the sacrifice every man must make in yielding obedience to duty. Besides, to retain the slave is to involve *him* in loss, and a loss infinitely beyond estimate by commercial currency—loss of self culture, self control, and individual dignity and freedom.

The Gospel requires us to suffer wrong or loss

always rather than do wrong. But in a relation essentially unjust the objection weighs nothing. The one great question is this: Is the relation wrong? If so, whether an unlawful business or slaveholding, it must be broken up, at whatever sacrifice. See Job xxxi. 10, 18; Acts xix. 19; Luke xix. 8.

Do we hear the answer so often given to such words, slaveholding is not *malum in se*! O, this paltry abstraction! how much of crime has it covered! What is sin, *per se*, even to taking away life? But slaveholding is not an abstraction. (Would God it were!) It lives, stalks abroad, boasts of its property in human flesh! It must, then, be judged like all other things, by a divine standard of rectitude. Brought into the presence of Christ, *it is malum in se, for it offends against every principle and precept he has given as a guide to duty*. O, it is melancholy, the bare fact that, at this day and in this land, there is a call to vindicate our Lord from a sanction of slaveholding. We seem to hear him read to us again from the book of Esaias, "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach deliverance to the captives, to set at liberty the bruised, [How many such has slavery!] to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

CHAPTER XIII.

POSITION OF APOSTLES.

THE teaching and practice of the Apostles in relation to slavery, deserve careful attention ; under their ministrations Christianity first entered upon slaveholding ground. Though their teaching is addressed solely to churches, or to those already converted to the faith of Jesus, we should expect some allusions to the subject, revealing their convictions, and pronouncing upon the course properly to be pursued, both by master and slave. Especially must we look for this in the Epistles of St. Paul, the most voluminous writer on Christian doctrine, and also pre-eminently *the apostle to the Gentiles*, the one most frequently brought into personal contact with the relation.

Two questions are to be considered :

1. What was the actual relation of master and slave in the Roman Empire at the time of their preaching ?

2. What is the Apostle's course and teaching in reference to the system ?

Slaves by the early laws of both Greece and Rome were considered chattels, and like any other

article, might be bought, sold, ceded, and bequeathed by will.

Until the time of Antoninus, the master had the *jus vitæ et necis* as well as power to inflict corporal punishment at discretion. The slave was completely at the will of the master, receiving for his subsistence a monthly allowance, but could not acquire property without the consent of the master.

Under the Lex Aelia sentia, of Augustus, (B. C. 30 to A. D. 14) the right of manumission, before often made easy, was circumscribed. It was made dependent on certain conditions, regulated by the respective ages of the emancipated and the emancipator. Even under this law the master was still a patron of the freedman, and the servant as still his client, dying intestate or without issue, the former master inherited his property. Gibbon though coloring slavery with imaginary excellencies, yet sets forth the obstacles frequently thrown in the way of emancipation, and the still degraded position occupied by the freedman. Though often of the same complexion with the master, the stain of slavery was seldom extinguished, until the third or fourth generation.

But these difficulties thrown in the way of emancipation, were most powerful in and around the capital, where slavery was most prevalent, and most deeply imbedded. In the eastern part of the empire civil commotions and the subjection of

these lands to a foreign rule, had tended to loosen the bond of slaves. Here also Christianity first took root, and spread most rapidly. The condition of the slave was far less degraded. Cases might often occur, not only of individual emancipation for cause or merit, but cases where motives of humanity or piety would lead masters to release all slaves held by them, and yet the act, neither arrest attention nor excite danger.

The state of the slave was hence nearly that of the servant in the South, only that it was modified in the matter of caste. The distinction in color, with us perpetual, with them would soon be obliterated, and the freedman take his place as a citizen, with no remaining mark of his origin. The same fact also tended to an exercise of justice toward them among humane men, since they were not regarded as an inferior or outcast race.

There were then difficulties in the way of the gospel, yet difficulties *seldom* insuperable. Public sentiment, lax laws, or benign ones, the prevalence of the religion of Christ ; might often, perhaps nearly always, in the colonies, give power of emancipation without conflict with civil authority. Was this a demand of Apostles ? In fields where they meet it, where the conversion of parties calls for direction and council in reference to the system, do they confirm or abolish the relation ? As St. Paul enters upon the subject most fully and most frequently meets with the relation,

we reserve his testimony as final, preceding it by the testimony of James and John.

“Behold, the hire of the laborers who have reaped down your fields, which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth : and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabbaoth.” James v. 4.

This epistle of James is addressed to the Jews “the twelve tribes who are scattered abroad.” It refers, therefore to sins practiced by Jews, and not to sins peculiar to Gentiles. Both Scott and Clark refer it to a violation of the law in Lev. xix. 13. “The wages of him that is hired shall not abide with thee all night until the morning.”

Scott has this pertinent comment : “The cruel injustice and oppression with which many treat their dependents and laborers, by whose toil and ingenuity they are enriched, and whom they leave to penury and distress, will cry for the most tremendous vengeance in the ears of the Lord of Hosts.”

The anathema then relates solely to the oppression of hired servants, day or yearly. But if such abuses came in this voluntary relation, how bitter beyond description must have been the condition of slaves under such masters if there were slaves among Jews ?

The passage confirms, therefore, the view taken all through this work, that slavery, or involuntary servitude, did not exist among Jews.

2. If God denounces in such terrific terms the oppression of masters toward free laborers, more fearful woes are reserved for those who not only unjustly task and beat, but withhold all wages, and make the laborer a mere chattel and brute.

"And the merchants of the earth shall weep and mourn over her, for no man buyeth her merchandise any more. The merchandise of gold and silver * * * of horses and chariots, and slaves [bodies] and souls of men * * * And they cast dust on their heads, and cried weeping and wailing, saying, Alas, alas, that great city wherein were made rich all that had ships in the sea by reason of her costliness! for in one hour is she made desolate."—Rev. xviii. 11, 12, 13, 19.

I do not propose to discuss the reference of this passage. It is a prophetic denunciation of *some* city or people, upon which God will visit destruction for certain sins. The one question to be raised here is this, What were these sins that challenge so fearful a doom?

Verse 2 discloses the sin: "Babylon the great is fallen, (*i. e.*, from moral purity,) and become an habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird, for all nations have drunk of the wine of the wrath of her fornication."

It is not the wealth, the commercial enterprise and magnificence of this Babylon that forms the crime. It is rather that she has become debauched by wealth, instead of making this an instrument

of good. That, lifted up, "she glorifies herself," and "lives deliciously," making her wealth and commerce a means of securing luxury and food for lust. Prominent in this is the great sin of *fornication*, and the traffic in the bodies and souls of men, in order to the gratification of this all-conquering lust. It indeed often denotes idolatry; but the force of the figure in this use arises from the fact that idolatry and "fornication" were inseparable, I had almost said were one. To see this compare Isa. i. xxi; Jer. xx., and iii. 1, 6, 8; Ezra xvi. 15, 16, 41; Hos. ii. 5, iv. 15; and especially Amos, ii. 6-9, where the literal abomination is represented as prosecuted shamelessly before the very altars. So also in Joel iii. 3, 6, a like sale of young persons is mentioned, not, indeed, under cover of idolatry, but for like infamous uses, and luxury and slavery and lewdness are conjoined. I might cite the testimony of individuals, some born and bred, others living long in slave States in our own country, to show that an awful and seemingly necessary accompaniment of slavery, is this same crime against bodily purity. The reader would turn with disgust from the recital of the extent, and unblushing boldness of the sin, debauching the slave and the white, and filling communities with "the wine of the wrath of fornication."

But to return. This merchandise of men is one great crime of this mystic Sodom. It is in itself a transgression of God's law, and a crime against

our fellow men. In this instance, aggravated as it was in Babylon and Tyre of old, and is now in our own land, by being engaged in not only for gain, but also for most abhorrent and unholy purposes. The delineation of great Babylon's sin, numbers this among the crimes for which she shall be made desolate. It bears an awful and unmistakable anathema upon the traffic, given not by John as an apostle merely, but by John the revealer, speaking from the mouth and by revelation of God.

I may add as incidental that the epistles to the seven churches in Asia, though very minute in the specification of forms of sin, and departure from the mind of the Spirit, yet convey no intimation of those churches being engaged in slave-holding. Much of corruption had already crept into some of them, especially into the churches of Thyatira and Laodicea. But there is no mention of sin growing out of slavery. The utter silence on this point seems plainly to imply that the churches were free from it. Individuals might fall into uncleanness and covert idolatry, as some did, but from slaveholding they were free. This could not be engaged in by night. It bore evidence which at once made the offender liable to rebuke ; and the drift of these epistles leads us unavoidably to conclude them free from the sin. If Paul, in other churches, was called upon to counsel and caution in the matter, the Holy Spirit must have done the

same here, if there were existing the same relation, with its dangers to the purity of religious life.

What now was the position taken by Paul in reference to the system? The first passage suggested by the inquiry is that found in 1 Tim. i. 9, 10, where in giving directions as to the character of Timothy's preaching, he sets forth briefly the objects of the divine law, in correction of some false notions, entertained by erring teachers of Christianity.

"The law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for *menstealers*, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine," &c.

In this passage Paul refers to menstealers as guilty of a crime, which is contrary to sound doctrine, and a transgression of the law of God, referring as all admit to the statute in Ex. xxi. 16. as re-affirmed by our Lord and still binding.

Bishop Horsley when urging the British Government to discontinue and outlaw the traffic in slaves, refers to this passage. The comment is so pertinent that we give the substance of his remarks. "The New Testament contains an express reprobation of the slave-trade by name as sinful in a very high degree. The apostle St. Paul having

spoken of persons that were lawless and disobedient, ungodly and sinners, unholy and profane, proceeds to specify and distinguish the several characters and descriptions of men, to whom he applies those very general epithets and they are these : murderers of fathers, murderers of mothers, manslayers, they that defile themselves with mankind, *menstealers*. This text condemns and prohibits the slave-trade, in one at least of its most productive modes. But I go further. I maintain that this text, rightly interpreted, condemns and prohibits the slave-trade *generally and in all its modes* : it ranks the slave-trade in the descending scale of crime next after parricide and homicide. The original word which the English bible renders 'menstealers,' is *andrapodistes*. Our translators have taken the word in its restricted sense, which it bears in the Attic law, in which *dike andrapodismou* was a criminal prosecution for the specific crime of kidnapping, the penalty of which was death. But the phraseology of Scripture in the preceptive parts especially, is a popular phraseology, and *andrapodistes* in its popular sense is a person who deals in men, literally a *slave-trader*. This is the English word, literally and exactly corresponding to the Greek."

Bloomfield in his excellent Annotations makes a similar comment and adds : " Let then the slave-traders of our times (Christians alas !) tremble, for *all* who in *any way* participate in that abominable

traffic are *andrapodistai*, since they thereby uphold a system which perpetually engenders-man-stealing." *

See also Henry and Pool *in loco*.

This passage therefore teaches the position of Paul doctrinally on the subject of slavery. As condemning it, in at least one form, and that, the form most essential to the system, viz., the right to buy and sell men as slaves.

In 1 Cor. vii. 21-23, we have a counsel to slaves as to freedom, and the length to which a desire for it may lead them. "Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it; but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather." St. Paul here teaches that while Christianity primarily proposes no change in the outward relations of society, but seeks rather to infuse a new life into the individual, anticipating and preparing thus for the time when this inward change shall work outward; yet teaches that this anxiety of the slave, freed spiritually in Christ, to be free also in body, is commendable. He counsels contentment, or rather submission to the inevitable yoke, and yet inculcates the duty of using all legitimate means for

* "Menstealers are inserted among those daring criminals, against whom the law of God directed its awful curses. (Ex. xxi. 15-17.) These are persons who kidnapped men to sell them for slaves: and this practice seems inseparable from the other iniquities and oppressions of slavery, nor can the slave-dealer by any means keep free from this atrocious criminality, if indeed the receiver be as bad as the thief." — SCOTT.

acquiring his freedom. "If thou mayest be free, use it rather."

This instruction to slaves assures them that their condition is abnormal, and unjust, and unbefitting Christian disciples. It thus keeps alive in them the anxiety for freedom, yet counsels them, as piety ever must, "Do not do wrong that good may come. Be faithful to your condition while the yoke remains; but if a lawful opportunity to secure your freedom present itself, use it." This teaching is in accordance with the doctrine, "the powers that be are ordained of God." We must *submit, not resist*, until such time as we have the power, by legitimate means, to change the form of government, or escape its oppressions.

There are other counsels, as in Col. iii. 22, 25; Tit. ii. 9, 10; 1 Pet. ii. 18-25; Eph. vi. 5, 9; and 1 Tim. vi. 1, 2. The passage in Timothy is the most pertinent, as the fullest, and is the only one on the duty of servants which need be cited. The others will be referred to, which the reader may see. This passage reads:

"Let as many servants as are under the yoke count their own masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed; and they that have believing masters, let them not despise, because they are brethren, but rather do them service, because they are believing and beloved, partakers of the benefit."

The passages which relate to masters are:

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a master in heaven.” Col. iv. 1.

“And ye masters, do the same thing unto them, (*i. e.*, do to them as unto Christ, with good will, and fidelity, and singleness of eye, in order to receive reward from the Lord,) forbearing threatening, knowing that your Master is in heaven, nor is there respect of persons with him.” Eph. vi. 9.

The question on these passages is this: What do they and what do they not teach on the rightfulness and wrong of slavery?

1. They recognize slavery as a legal relation: at least, imply this.

2. They recognize it as an unhappy one; as a system offering peculiar temptations to the slave to purloin or steal, to begrudge the unrewarded labor, to answer again, to indulge bitterness towards his master; and as a relation under which the slave chafed, and was wont to complain, and demand his freedom, especially when converted to the Gospel. See the passages.

3. They speak of it as an unhappy system for the master, tending to tyranny, to cruelty, to unjust exactions, and hence as dangerous to the purity of religious life.

4. They enjoin obedience on the part of slaves; but in this simply enjoin what was duty by divine as well as human law so long as the relation remained.

5. They command masters not only to treat

their servants with "good will" and "fidelity," "to do to them as unto Christ," but, also, to give unto them "that which is just and equal." These commands are fatal to a relation of slavery; they strike away at a touch the claim of property in the labor, and life, and loins of a man; they make an appeal to the believing master, which interdicts him in maintaining his hold upon the slave. "Just and equal! what care I whether my pockets are picked, or the proceeds of my labor are taken from me? What matters it whether my horse is stolen, or the value of him in my labor be taken from me? Do we talk of violating the rights of masters, and depriving them of property in slaves? And will some one tell me if there be anything in which a man has or can have so perfect a right of property as in his own limbs, bones, and sinews? Out upon such folly! The man who cannot see that involuntary domestic slavery, as it exists among us, is founded upon the principle of taking by force that which is another's, has simply no moral sense." *

These words, from one himself a native of a slave State, and familiar with the system, cannot be regarded as the deductions of a fanatic, or a prejudiced mind. The sacredness of one's individual right to himself, St. Paul sets forth by the phrase, "do to them as unto Christ," which he

applies to both parties. If Christ then were bought, or born and held as a slave, and the act towards him were a crime, which who would question ; then, by the same right, is every man free, and every attempt to enslave a fellow man a crime. The words touch the very core of the relation ; they make the man who defrauds, and beats, and enslaves another, bear precisely the guilt of one who should thus use Christ himself. The injunction to render "that which is just and equal," is enforced by the declaration that God does not distinguish between servant and master, "bond and free," in his awards to evil and good. It is the course a man pursues toward another *as a man*, which shall govern that award. God thus lifts up the despised and degraded slave to the level of the master, bringing him into the dignity of divine clemency and regard. As Paul bore patiently unjust stripes and imprisonment, so he enjoins patience and fidelity in the slave, unjustly deprived of his liberty ; but when he instructs masters, it is in words which forbid the injustice. The presumption from them is that the Gospel virtually, if not actually, sundered the bonds of the slave when the master was converted to Christ. The presumption will be stronger if we consider that Paul places servants of believing masters anti-thetically to servants, who were under the yoke. One class he recognizes as bound by a legal chain, and counsels submission and patience, that the

name of God be not blasphemed. That is that the unbelieving master might not be prejudiced against the gospel, by charging upon its influence, the restlessness of slaves.

Those who have believing masters are counseled to cheerful service, and not to despise their masters, plainly implying that when both parties became Christians, the bond was virtually rent, and servants were held by the master only under a nominal relation. Of this fact servants were cognizable, and were prone to take advantage of it, refusing service and deference.

If both classes were still legally and morally slaves, the distinction here made is unwarranted and absurd, and this feeling of the slave unaccountable.

6. Again, the language and the very counsel given, implies that there was a new restiveness given to slaves, even of unbelieving masters, when they were led to Christ. A feeling then becoming deeper that they ought to be free, and a disposition to assert and demand the right. The spring of that new temper Ignatius gives in his epistle to Polycarp, (A. D. 80—100) chapter ii. 4, 5, only a few years after the death of Paul. Therein he admonishes servants "not to be puffed up, nor to desire to be set free at the public cost, or at the expense of Christian brethren, but to serve more zealously, subject to the glory of God, that they might obtain from him a better freedom."

From this passage we learn that even slaves of unbelieving masters, who would not of course free them, were accustomed to demand their redemption at the expense of the church as a right. They were thus liable to abuse a salutary custom in their profession of discipleship, looking more to the earthly than the spiritual freedom. Hence the form of admonition, which is not inconsistent with, but a direction in the use of Paul's advice. "If thou mayest be free, use it rather."

St. Paul then does not sanction the relation of slavery, but treats it as a system virtually abolished by the presence of the gospel: The quotation from Ignatius is almost identical in sentiment with the counsel of Paul. The slaves were ignorant and poor, just the class most liable to abuse any privilege, and most ready to embrace any faith, offering them immunity from present evils. But as even Apostles could not discern motives, and might often receive into the church as real converts, those whose chief motive was to secure freedom, the tendency soon needed caution.

The case of Onesimus presents us with a personal direction, given by St. Paul to a fugitive slave. It has been often considered, yet there may be new light. We remark in reference to it: that while there is some doubt, as to his being the slave of Philemon, and the word *doulos* does not determine the doubt, yet for the sake of the argument we admit, that Onesimus was Philemon's

slave, or legal property. He had escaped and fled to Rome. There, under Paul's ministry, he was converted and gave some promise of usefulness. Paul was in doubt what to do : whether to retain him, or recommend his return. That doubt he settles by *moral*, not legal considerations. Philemon was an acquaintance in whose piety Paul had confidence : wishing, as it would seem from the address, to test it, to show his own confidence in Philemon, and yet to give him an opportunity of proving it well placed, he sends Onesimus back that the freedom might be given "*willingly, not of necessity.*"

"Wherefore, though I might be much bold in Christ to enjoin thee that which is convenient, yet for love's sake I rather beseech thee, being such an one as Paul the aged, and now a prisoner of Jesus Christ. I beseech thee for my son Onesimus, whom I have sent again : thou therefore receive him, that is, mine own bowels : (very dear unto me,) whom I would have retained with me, that in thy stead he might have ministered unto me in the bonds of the gospel : but without thy mind I would do nothing ; that thy benefit should not be as it were of necessity, but willingly. For perhaps he departed from thee for a season, that thou shouldest receive him forever ; not now as a servant, but above a servant, a brother beloved, specially to me, but how much more unto thee, both in the flesh, and in the Lord ? Receive him as myself. If he hath wronged thee, or oweth thee ought, put that to my account. I Paul have

written with mine own hand. I will repay it : albeit I do not say how thou owest unto me even thine own self besides. Let me have joy of thee in the Lord. Refresh my bowels in the Lord. Having confidence in thy obedience, I wrote unto thee, knowing that thou wilt also do more than I say."

This is a peculiar case. The utmost Paul could do would be to urge and recommend a return. But the very hesitation with which he does this, shows, at least, a doubt whether duty required it. The very multiplication of arguments the most moving that can be addressed to a Christian mind, the tender, beseeching appeals, the careful removal of all objections on the ground of wrong or debt, show that Paul's mind was much exercised in saying to the fugitive, Go back, and let the Christian love of your master confirm your freedom.

One cannot read this epistle carefully without a conviction of certain things :

1. That had the master been an unbeliever, Paul would never have recommended a return.

2. That Paul was full of an irrepressible conviction that, above all things, this Christian convert ought not to be, even nominally a slave.

3. That his entire Christian nature vigorously reprobates the relation as an unjust one.

4. While Paul does not plant himself in a hos-

tile or rebellious attitude toward legal statutes—even those which create property in man—yet he does here remove the virus of the law, and also insist upon a surrender of the legal right.

5. It teaches that, when a slave escapes from a believing master, and is taken up by a Christian brother, he—the brother—is to recommend the slave's return, only for the purpose of securing a legal freedom, and only when he has implicit confidence that the return will secure this.

6. When a fugitive slave becomes a Christian, and is sent back to his master, he—the master—should receive him, not as a slave, but for the express purpose of granting him manumission. It is the concurrent testimony of tradition that Philemon at once freed Onesimus. But, indeed, we do not need this testimony. The epistle is in evidence, either Philemon yielded to Paul's appeal, or he was not a Christian; for, to a Christian conscience, there was no escape from the act as a most solemn Christian duty.

7. It shows that, so far was St. Paul from sanctioning and abetting slavery, he has written the most touching and authoritative argument ever addressed to the conscience of a believer in favor of emancipation. Many questions might be raised in reference to this case. But we have only the epistle as a ground of argument. We must interpret *this*, not something else; and the view taken,

and the inferences drawn from it, are, we think, beyond cavil or reproach. If the epistle means anything, it means *anti-slavery* and *pro-emancipation*.

It is unnecessary to examine other passages. Those cited are the texts most pertinent to the subject, and they give us as the sum of apostolic teaching the following facts :

1. That the apostles condemn slaveholding, yet not indiscriminately, *i. e.*, not confounding the mercenary with the Christlike, the holding for gain, and the holding by constraint of statute laws, the nominal and reluctant with the real and purposed.

2. That they virtually abolished the relation, and did so in full where it was in their power.

3. That if they suffered the outward relation to remain, it was expressly understood to be under protest ; a relation to be sundered as soon as it became possible to Christian master or slave.

4. That thus, while not acting in conflict with civil authorities, nor arraying the church as a revolutionary party, they did bring all the moral power of the gospel to bear, not only to assuage the evils of the relation, but to work a destruction of the relation itself.

But if these statements represent truly the teaching and position of the apostles, we must expect to find the same position taken by

the church subsequently, especially in churches maintaining purity of doctrine and life. Was this really the case? Christianity, we know, soon became the prevailing religion of the Roman empire. Did it loose the bonds of the captive?

CHAPTER XIV

POSITION OF THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

THE gospel, during the apostolic period of the Church, had no influence over civil legislation. The church was a persecuted body, struggling for existence as well as for extension, and hence a violent rending of any civil relation would have been perilous, as well as in conflict with the word of God.

Besides, the aim of Christianity is not to subdue governments, but individual hearts. To mold and regenerate these *as individuals*, and its influence upon the machinery of state, is but an incidental result of its supremacy in the minds of subjects and lawmakers. Its moral power is the only influence it brings to bear; this, as we have shown, is in conflict with slavery. But that antagonism must not be looked for in acts of legislation nor in revolutionary movements.

As the gospel deals with individual consciences, and seeks to bring man as man, and not merely as a citizen, up to its own level, we must look for cases of abolition only in instances of individual

emancipation. Was this, then, a result of the progress of the gospel?

The teaching of St. Paul and Ignatius, to which we referred, chapter thirteenth, we think imply, strongly if not conclusively, that freedom, either by emancipation or purchase, at the expense of the church, wherever possible, was the accompaniment of conversion. The appeals were not made to lawmakers but subjects, nor were they powerless, as a few facts will show.

Lactantius, giving ostensibly a view of the practical bearing of Christianity upon slavery, says :

“Should any say are there not also among you rich and poor, servants and masters, distinctions among individuals? No; we call ourselves brethren, for no other reason than that we hold ourselves all equal. For, since we measure everything human not by its outward appearance, but by its intrinsic value, we have, notwithstanding the difference in outward relations, no slaves; but we call and considered them all brethren in the spirit, and fellow servants in religion.” Again he says: “God would have all men equal; with him there is neither servant nor master. If He is the same father to all, they are all with the same right free. So no one is poor before God but he who is destitute of righteousness; no one is rich but he who is full of virtues.”

These passages strongly imply that not only did conversion virtually end the relation of mas-

ter and slave, but did it actually—and that it did is obvious from many instances of emancipation, which show clearly the position of the church.

In the reign of Trajan (A. D. 78–117,) a Roman prefect, named Hermas, received baptism at an Easter festival, with his wife and children. He was the owner of twelve hundred and fifty slaves, and on that occasion gave them all their freedom, and munificent gifts besides.*

In the reign of Diocletian, a wealthy prefect named Chromatius, on embracing Christianity, gave freedom to about fourteen hundred slaves, who were baptized with himself; the pious master giving as the reason, that their sonship to God put an end to their servitude to man.†

In the first part of the fourth century, there were many instances of such manumission by converted members of wealthy Roman families.

To state a single one may suffice as an illustration of the prevailing sentiment. Three members of an old Roman family, St. Cantius, Cantianus and Cantianills set all their slaves at liberty after they had received baptism. The number in this instance was comparatively small, [73] and yet it is not less significant. The facts show a strong and prevailing sentiment in the early church, pro-

* See Acts of the Martyrdom of Alexander, Bishop of Rome.

† See Martyrdom of St. Sebastian.

nouncing slaveholding unchristian, and a wrong of which the believer must be free.

Since the third century the manumission of slaves became a solemn act, which took place in the presence of the clergy and the congregation. The master led the slaves to the altar, there the document of emancipation was read, the priest pronounced the blessing and the congregation received him as a free brother with equal rights and privileges. Constantine found this custom already established and African councils of the fourth century requested the emperor to give it general force.

Christianity from the outset spread freely among the slaves and poorer classes of free citizens, and very slowly among the noble and rich. Celsus even makes this a ground of reproach, that piety could accommodate itself so readily "to fools, slaves, women and children." Yet to the church this was a noble excellence in the dispensation of grace, that it gave its richness to the poor, the despised, the weak, thus seeking to elevate those upon whom the heathen looked as outcasts, to the level of moral purity and religious life.

Chrysostom and Origen labored not only to instruct slaves and fit them for freedom, but with many others labored to secure the abolition of the evil. This persistent decided action of the church did much to soften the sentiments of men towards

slaves, and was the wedge steadily driven, which finally resulted in its extinction.

The fellowship of masters and slaves at the table of the Lord, made them feel the old relation virtually abolished, and bond and free alike brethren. But this sacred rite of religion, however, closely bringing them into Christian fraternity, could not remove the evil by merely assuaging its severity. The church must go farther in anticipation of the danger to Christian purity, involved in sanctioning and perpetuating this unnatural relation. Leaving the slave in bonds, left him subject to evils, endangering the stability, and culture of piety. Leaving masters clothed with this despotic power, surrendered them to an exercise of authority, perilous to meekness and purity of life. It hence silently and firmly sundered the relation with all its members. The sense of inward freedom in the gospel gave emphasis to individual dignity. The awful sanctions and revelations of the gospel gave fearful import to a human life. The truth elevated men as men, moral beings, immortal creatures of God, and this sense of inward freedom and equality before the Maker, sought not only to extinguish all degrading distinctions in religious society, but sought the same result on society without.

CHAPTER XV.

INFLUENCE OF CHRISTIANITY ON SLAVERY IN

LATER HISTORY.

CHRISTIANITY, though appealing to subjects rather than to law-makers, must be supposed to have exerted some influence over civil legislation, when it had acquired dominion over the moral sentiments of any people. Was it so in the Roman Empire? The following statement from the pen of M. Guizot, is worthy of notice. He says :

“It was by putting an end to the cruel system of slavery, that Christianity extended its mild influence to the practice of war, and that barbarous art, softened by its humane spirit, ceased to be so destructive.”

The testimony of the eminent historian Robertson, is equally pertinent :

“Upon establishing despotic government in the Roman Empire, domestic tyranny rose in a short time to an astounding height. In that rank soil every vice which power nourishes in the great and oppression engenders in the mean thrived and grew apace. * * * It is not perhaps the authority of any single detached precept of the Gospel, so much as the spirit and genius of the Christian religion, more powerful than any particular com-

mand, which hath abolished the practice of slavery throughout the world. The temper of Christianity was mild and gentle, and added such lustre and dignity to human nature, as rescued it from the dishonorable servitude into which it was sunk."

These words are true. It is the spirit of the Gospel, the felt antagonism of the word of God, which has ever been the instrument and the mighty argument wielded in the overthrow of slavery in different states of the world. It is one of the most significant chapters in the history of the church; it is one of the most benign temporal results in the progress of the gospel, that wherever it has been received, it has gradually undermined and upheaved all forms of oppression.

We see its power when in the fourth century Constantine ascended the throne as the first Christian Emperor. One of the noblest enactments in all his reign was the edict for the observance of Sunday, and the requirement that the senate should transact no ordinary business on that day, *save to consummate the manumission of a slave*. It is a gleam of light on the questionable piety of the monarch, to see this still half pagan emperor, lifting up a slave, the humblest member of his realm—to the dignity of imperial care and mercy.

We see the same pressure bearing upon the feudal system of the middle ages. Slavery was an integral part of this system, being a merciful substitute for the death of the captive. Debt also made

some slaves. Gaming often reduced its victims to the same fate, and some crimes bore the penalty of slavery. The swallowing up of small estates by wealthy barons made many serfs. Against this system the *Popes and the Church* generally protested, especially against the shame of holding a Christian as a slave. In 1318 France passed an edict of emancipation, which was repeated three years later.

A few years subsequent England took the same step, and by the 15th century the system of serfdom had entirely ceased. It had existed from the eleventh century, and had gained a powerful supremacy, yet in three centuries the church wiped out this blot upon society.

Froissart in his *Chronicles* of the olden time, gives the following picture of the popular feeling in England during the reign of Edward III. :

"A priest in the county of Kent, called John Ball, was accustomed to harangue the people in this manner, 'How ill they have used us! and for what reason do they hold us in bondage? Are we not all descendants from the same parents, Adam and Eve? And what reason can they give that they should be any more masters than ourselves? except perhaps in making us labor and work for them to spend. They are clothed in velvets and rich stuff, ornamented with ermine and other furs, while we are forced to wear poor cloth. They have wine, spices and fine bread, when we have only rye and the refuse of straw. They have fine seats and manors, when we must

brave the wind and rain in our labor in the field, but it is from our labor they have wherewith to support their pomp. We are called *slaves*, and if we do not perform our services are beaten, and we have no sovereign to whom we may complain and who will hear us and do us justice. Let us go to the king, who is young, and remonstrate with him on our servitude, *telling him we must have it otherwise, or we shall find a remedy for it ourselves.*'"^{*}

To the people these appeals came with touching eloquence, and they were accustomed to say, "John Ball preaches such and such things, and he speaks truth."

These utterances were indeed repulsive to the haughty heart of baronial power, but they have done their work. They were the sentiments, which running silently among the peasants of England, wrought an indomitable purpose--and as they reach on for supremacy in the heart of the nation, we hear the departing tread of all feudal doctrines and divisions in society. The baron lost his vassals, and the king was compelled to leave legislation to his parliament.

It was the same silent but onward march of Christianity, which led the Quakers in 1751 entirely to abolish slavery among themselves. From that time they have taken decided ground against all its forms. Thomas Clarkson gave his energies and his fortune to secure the abolition of slavery

^{*} Put these words in the mouth of a southern negro preacher—and who could answer the appeal?

in the British realm, and to the influence of his efforts, and other Christian philanthropists we must attribute much of the interest awakened in such minds as Wilberforce, Fox, and Pitt, the great champions of emancipation, among whom Granville Sharp stands prince among princes.

Let us trace the history of anti-slavery action from that period.

The first effort was to secure the abolition of the African slave trade as the fruitful fountain of the system. In 1788 William Pitt presented a petition to the house of commons, against the trade, which was soon followed by many others. The merchants immediately took the alarm. With an appalling coolness they weighed pecuniary profit against inhumanity and crime. The trade was worth, they said, nearly a million pounds sterling profit to manufacturers and those engaged in the traffic, and the government received £256,000 sterling annually from the slave tax. Bristol and Liverpool were especially active against the movement, as the wealth of those cities flowed in chiefly as the fruit of the trade. The piety and humanity of the nation were moved in favor of the abolition, but the commercial opposition was so great, that not until June 10, 1806, did the act become a law. It was then passed however by a surprising majority, 114 votes in favor and but 15 against the measure.

Denmark, in 1794, declared the slave trade unlawful after January 1st, 1804.

Feb. 6, 1815, Portugal provided for the abolition after Jan. 21, 1823.

Nov. 20, 1815, France, often foiled by changing governments, and mercantile greed, declared for immediate abolition.

Spain the same year pledged herself to a total abolition after 1820.

It was outlawed in the Netherlands 1814, and in Sweden 1813. In 1826, a treaty was concluded with Brazil prohibiting the slave trade after 1830.

Thus England finally triumphed in her great undertaking, and the slave traffic bore the deserved reprobation of the entire civilized world; for observe public sentiment in our own country had kept pace with the movement in Europe, indeed had anticipated it. As early as 1645 Massachusetts, while yet a colony, passed a law prohibiting the buying and selling of slaves, except those taken in lawful war, or reduced to service by crime. In 1703 an attempt was made to restrain the importation by an enormous duty on all imported negroes, and by her constitution in 1780 she declared slavery abolished.

Virginia as early as 1699 restrained the traffic in slaves by heavy duties, and in 1788 abolished it by law.

In 1774 the Continental Congress passed a resolution disapproving the traffic and urging all the

colonies to abandon the trade with Africa. But the conventions of delegates in Virginia and North Carolina had anticipated Congress in their disapproval of the system.

Before the adoption of the Federal Constitution (in 1788-9) Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Connecticut and Massachusetts had all outlawed the traffic.

But the movement did not cease with the abolition of the slave trade. The conviction in England and also in many of the Federal States, demanded the extinction of the system in all its forms, and in a measure accomplished it.

In New Jersey slavery was provisionally abolished in 1784; all children born of a slave after 1804 being declared free after the year 1820.

Connecticut in 1784 and 1797 provided for the gradual extinction of slavery.

In Rhode Island, no person could be born a slave after 1784.

In 1787 Congress ordained that slavery should never exist in the territory north-west of the Ohio, looking to its speedy extinction in all the States, and seeking to hasten it by this act which precluded the formation of new Slave States.

Vermont and New Hampshire both abolished slavery in their constitutions, and Pennsylvania in 1780.

In New York it was provisionally abolished in 1799, 28 years apprenticeship being allowed in

slaves born after that date, and in 1817 it was enacted that slavery should not exist after ten years or 1827.

In South America, with the exception of Brazil, slavery has either been abolished or is drawing to a close.

In Mexico president Guereco declared all slaves free Sept. 15, 1829.

England, which had been most active in securing the outlawing of the slave trade, was most fettered in her attempts at emancipation, from her vast commercial interests. But in 1834 the cause of freedom triumphed. The famous abolition act was then passed, by which, on the first of Aug. of that year slavery was to cease in all the British dominions. Slaves were to be apprenticed to their masters and finally freed Aug. 1st, 1838, and Aug. 1st, 1840. But such was the popular urgency, that it finally ceased Aug. 1st, 1838, with an expense to the British government of *twenty million pounds sterling*.

No chapter in the recent history of the world is so full of intense moral interest, as this which traces the influence of the gospel and of Christian humanity, upon the system of slavery. The conflict of the system with free labor may have done something to check opposition to these movements, but the chief argument has been the inhumanity of the system and its utter incompatibility with the spirit and teaching of the word of God.

England has taken the initiative and been most active and self-sacrificing in its accomplishment. How she viewed the teaching of the Holy Scriptures, and what was with her the great overbearing argument, may be seen from the writings of her statesmen and philanthropists for a century and a half past. As a gross defamation of the motives of British statesmen has gone abroad of late, let us pause a moment and recall the words of some of those men, who were foremost in the struggle to destroy a gigantic evil.

Speaking in denunciation of the Slave Trade, in the British Parliament, Lord Huddleston said :

“That a curse attended this trade even in the mode of defending it. By a certain fatality, none but the vilest arguments were brought forward, which corrupted the very persons who used them. Every one of these was built upon the narrow ground of interest, of pecuniary profit, of sordid gain : in opposition to every motive that had reference to humanity, justice and religion, or to that great principle which comprehended them all.”

Bishop Porteus, in the same great conflict, declared :

“The Bible classes men-stealers and slave-traders among the murderers of fathers and mothers, and the most profane criminals of earth.”

More moving were the words of Bishop Butler :

“Despicable as the negroes may appear in our eyes, they are the creatures of God, and of that

race of mankind for whom Christ died, and it is inexcusable to keep them in ignorance of the end for which they were made, and the means whereby they may become partakers of the general redemption."

"Personal freedom," said Charles Fox, "is a right of which he who deprives a fellow man, is *criminal in so depriving him*, and he who withholds is *no less criminal in withholding*."

Even John Wesley grew vehement over the sin and exclaimed :

"American Slavery is the vilest that ever saw the sun. It is the sum of all villainies." And again to the slave-dealers. "You have carried them into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life, such slavery as is not to be found with the Turks in Algiers."

In one of his most eloquent passages, William Pitt exclaimed :

"It is injustice to permit slavery to remain for a single hour."

These passages are not the arguments of national jealousy, seeking to ruin a kindred people. They are rather the vigorous outflow of a high, pure Christian sentiment, a conviction that everything in heaven, and everything good on earth, condemned and was utterly opposed to the traffic in human flesh. The evidence of her philanthropy and practical piety may be seen also in the fact that in securing the abolition of the slave trade,

and the emancipation of slaves in her own dominions, Great Britain has paid out nearly thirty millions pounds sterling!! as indemnification for loss.

The same arguments were all-powerful in the eastern and middle states, urging to acts of emancipation, and they were carried under the demand of a humane Christian sentiment. The conflict with free labor may have done something to restrain opposition, but the prevailing impulse was the felt conflict of slavery with Christianity, a conviction that the word of God does not sanction, that it is not silent on the subject, that it condemns slavery.

We need not confirm these statements. To most minds they will suggest arguments once deemed powerful, if they are not now. Yet at the risk of wearying the reader's patience, we may cite a paragraph or two, which we beg American Christians to ponder.

The General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church in 1818 unanimously said :

"We consider the voluntary enslaving of one part of the human race by another as a gross violation of the most precious and sacred rights of human nature, as utterly inconsistent with the law of God, which requires us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and as totally irreconcilable with the spirit and principles of the Gospel of Christ, which enjoins that 'all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them.'

* * * We rejoice that the church to which we

belong commenced, as early as any other in this country, the good work of endeavoring to put an end to slavery, and that in the same work many of its members have ever since been, and now are, among the most active, vigorous, and efficient laborers. * * * We earnestly exhort them to continue, and, if possible, to increase their exertions to effect a total abolition of slavery."

In 1784 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church said :

"Every member of our Society who has slaves in his possession, shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant, legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession."

Another rule was in these words :

"No person holding slaves shall in future be admitted into the Society, or to the Lord's Supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery."

The answer to the question—"What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away,"—was :

"They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them."

In 1785, this church said :

"We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction, by all wise and prudent means."

In 1795 it said :

"The preachers and other members of our So-

ciety are requested to consider the subject of Negro slavery, with deep attention, and that they impart to the General Conference, through the medium of the Yearly Conferences, or otherwise, any important thoughts on the subject, that Conference may have full light, in order to take further steps toward eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the Church of God with which they are connected. The annual Conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those States in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge, in the most respectful but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of slaves. Proper committees shall be appointed by the annual Conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for conducting the business; and presiding elders, elders, deacons, and traveling preachers, shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to forward the blessed undertaking. Let this be continued from year to year, till the desired end be accomplished."

Ponder, in addition, the words of Dr. Breckenridge, from whom we have given other statements, and then ask, was the church *right* then, and is she *wrong* now? To ask the question is to answer it.

"What is slavery as it exists among us? We reply, It is that condition enforced by the laws of one-half the States of this confederacy, in which

one portion of the community, called masters, is allowed such power over another called slaves, as

"1. To deprive them of the entire earnings of their own labor, except only so much as is necessary to continue labor itself, by continuing healthful existence, thus committing clear robbery ;

"2. To reduce them to the necessity of universal concubinage, by denying to them the civil rights of marriage ; thus breaking up the dearest relations of life, and encouraging universal prostitution ;

"3. To deprive them of the means and opportunities of moral and intellectual culture, in many States making it a high penal offence to teach them to read ; thus perpetuating whatever of evil there is that proceeds from ignorance ;

"4. To set up between parents and their children an authority higher than the impulse of nature and the laws of God ; which breaks up the authority of the father over his own offspring, and at pleasure separates the mother at a returnless distance from her child ; thus abrogating the clearest laws of nature, thus outraging all decency and justice, and degrading and oppressing thousands of thousands of beings created like themselves in the image of God.

"This is slavery as it is daily exhibited in every slave State. * * * A system which is utterly indefensible on every correct human principle, and utterly abhorrent from every law of God."—*Biblical Repertory*, July, 1833. pp. 293, 4.

CHAPTER XV.I

CONCLUSION.

It may be thought that my work is done ; that having vindicated the word of God and a pure Christianity in all ages from complicity with slavery, there need no more be said. The main object is, indeed, accomplished, according to the writer's ability ; but it remains to drive the argument into the heart of our own system of servitude.

For convenience, I have chosen to stand accuser ; to gather into distinct counts the indictment which Christianity pleads against American slavery. If there is power in them, it is because they are true ; because, in reading them, the most common mind will feel that each count is tamely worded to express the monstrous wrong it arraigns ; and must feel that the sun never rose on an institution so thoroughly and fundamentally anti-Christian, so utterly opposed to the religion it professes ; none so guilty as this, which, in the very glare of the Gospel, works out deeds of darkness which the system necessitates, yet which are, like itself, reprobated of earth and heaven.

CRIMES OF SLAVERY.

1. I arraign American slavery for destroying the divine constitution respecting the human race. That constitution declares that "God hath made of one blood all the nations of the earth." Slavery subverts it, making the black an exception, and denies him the common rights of the race ; it puts him below and beyond that constitution, in order to justify the crime of oppressing the African.

It thus subverts the natural rights of four millions of our fellow men, depriving them of personal freedom, and making their life, liberty, and happiness dependent on the will of another—not, as God ordains, on the will and conduct of the black himself.

2. I arraign American slavery for violating all the positive divine laws that are appointed to govern our intercourse among our fellow men—laws which require us to "love the stranger," "to feed the poor," to "reward the laborer," to "do good to all men as we have opportunity ;" which forbid us to "oppress the stranger," and command us to "love him as ourselves." Slavery declares the people of another nation enemies, instead of objects of solicitude ; it makes their very weakness a ground of enslaving them, thus reversing the principle laid down by our Lord in the parable of the good Samaritan, which is of universal application and authority. It thus denies towards

Africa—a tenth part of the globe—the great principle on which our missionary efforts are based and pleaded.

3. I arraign American slavery for degrading the sacred rite of marriage to the basest concubinage ; for setting aside the divine law, which declares them “one flesh,” which unites them for life, which suffers separation only on a single ground. In place of this divine ordinance, slavery establishes a union which no ministry, even at the altar of Christ, can make more permanent or sacred than a living together in uncleanness while the master or masters permit ; a bond held so light in a Christian country, that the parties are often separated and given to others on the ground of unfruitfulness, or in order to a sale of one of the parties, or in mere cruelty, to chill affections too ardent for the master’s mercenary interest.

4. I arraign American slavery for destroying the parental relation ; taking from the parent the fruit of his loins ; forbidding those whom God has made the only and rightful guardians of the child any possession therein—any right of culture or control beyond the interest or caprice of the master ; for selling mothers and fathers from children, and children from parents ; for thus invading and blasting the holiest affections implanted in the human breast ; for taking the child from the very womb of the mother, as not her own, but another’s—one who has no claim—

no shadow of claim (beyond that given by iniquitous human laws), for ever interfering with the relation, save by permission of the parties.

5. I arraign American slavery as guilty of denying to four millions of our fellow men, that mental culture, which they need, and which is their privilege as fellow men. We are seeking to give this culture to the black in Africa, an endeavor which is a confession on the part of piety, that the endeavor is duty. If it is duty to enlighten them across the sea, then it is a crime to withhold it at home, and the laws and the sentiment, and the very institution, which precludes this mental culture in the South, are all crimes against our fellow men, against the gospel and against God.

6. I arraign American slavery for denying to a part of our common race the great privilege and right, which is the glory of our Protestant christianity. We hold and recount it as the chief conquest of the reformation, that it unlocks the Bible and opens it to all, giving to every conscience the right of interpretation and imposing the duty of studying the word, as the determiner of doctrine and the rule of life. Slavery seals up the Bible to four millions of immortals. It reads to them what and where it will. It dictates the credum and the form of worship. It gives or withholds the Bible and the Sabbath at will, giving always little and often no religious culture and privilege.

7. I arraign American slavery for prostituting

our holy religion to the office of a posse of police, and of mere holiday enjoyment. It is a fact well known that masters, the most cruel and impious, often favor professions of piety by slaves, in order by the restraints of religion to bind them more firmly in contentment with their lot. Intelligent slaveholders tell us that while there are instances of a devoted and pure religious life, yet with the mass of slaves piety is but a carousal: that after frenzied and extraordinary manifestations of emotion in the name of religion, slaves go away as from a saturnalia to lie, steal and be unclean. Southern bishops mourning over this defective and shabby piety, declare it a fruit of ignorance, out of which slavery will not suffer them to be lifted.

This is not the doctrine of Christ which enjoins culture, and growth, and intelligence. It deserves no other name than a perversion and a prostitution of our holy religion. A prostitution more gross, than that of Rome herself.

8. I arraign American slavery for the inhumanity of the laws which sanction and support it. Laws which against natural right, and against the ordinance of God, impose slavery upon one part of the population, a slavery descending through generation after generation, never ending, and placing them absolutely in the power and at the disposition of a few men, under the title of owner and master. Laws given the name of Christian legislation, which if bearing upon brutes, would make

humanity cry out against them. Laws which permit and defend torture, and cruel punishment, which forbid, or hinder by checks and penalties, emancipation, which restrict the right of assembly for religious worship, which deny the right of learning to read, and imprison the Christian kindness, which would open the eyes of a fellow man to the truths of salvation.

9. I arraign American slavery for the sufferings it imposes on its helpless victims. What mean these advertisements of fugitives, that tell of scars and lameness? These bills of sale, that describe men by brands and maims? These decisions of courts that, amid evidence of unnumbered stripes, and even death under them, send home the accused master or driver free of guilt? Do they look like "Giving that which is just and equal; doing to them as unto Christ, forbearing threatening?"

It is true, these things are neither universal nor general. Many generous minds, no doubt, even in the South, blush over them with kindling indignation; but they are justly charged upon slavery as its crime because they are *frequent*, and especially because they go *unrebuked* by magistrates and even by the Church of Christ, as things *necessitated* by the compulsory character of the relation.

10. I arraign American slavery for the unpar-

alleled crime of dooming the *unborn* to perpetual bondage! "No injustice can be more audacious than that which makes misfortune and crime descend from father to son, and dooms the child of Africans to perpetual slavery, for no better reason than that his parents had thus been doomed before him. He who is not born cannot be a slave. * * * Hereditary slavery, therefore, is without pretense, save in *avowed rapacity*."

11. I arraign American slavery for debauching the morals of slaves, and I prove it by the fact that every eighteenth person in the South is a mulatto!* I prove it also by the testimony of a thousand credible witnesses and sharers in the debauchery, that slavery is now in this Christian land, under the very reprobation God sets upon bodily impurity, just what it was in Pagan lands, a fountain of uncleanness. I prove it also by the destruction of the marriage relation—by the fact stated by a Southern writer, "there was never born in this nation a legitimate slave; every one, without exception, is in the contemplation of law, *filius neminis*, and by statute a bastard."

12. I arraign American slavery for debauching the morals of the whites. The facts appealed to under the last head attest it; and I add, that while in the North this vice is driven into the

* See last Census.

coverts of our largest cities, in the South and South-west it goes everywhere with an unblushing front ; nor do I hesitate to say that this sin is an hundredfold more prominent in slaveholding than in free States.

13. Finally, I arraign American slavery for debauching the entire country. It has maintained its *code of honor* at a sacrifice of a thousand lives—not less than thirty-five during the year past. It has fostered dissipation and gaming, things always the fruit of crime-gotten gains. By the very intercourse of the sections of our land, it has spread the infection of impurity, thus lessening the sacredness of human life, of the marriage tie, of personal integrity, and taught a school of morals as lax and depraved as ever flowed from the capital of France.

It has corrupted our literature. A press, catering to the tastes of the million rather than sacrifice its interest, has been silent on the question of slavery. The religious press has bowed at the same altar. Conscience, stifled to silence over one towering sin, in obedience to the pocket, has lost its equilibrium, until houses that claim a religious element, have ceased to question the propriety of any publication that *will sell*—even the lowest French morality—and in many minds once above this descent, *expediency*, or, in other words, *pecuniary interest*, has a power far greater than the divine word, *right*.

It has debauched LEGISLATION. The cry of "*dissolution*," heard even in the Convention that formed the Constitution, and rung ever since as the argument of the South, has done its work. Honor, humanity, Christianity, have gone down before it. The wisest and best men of the North and South have felt slavery wrong, and have in times past labored to keep it out of new territory. But this monstrous, latest argument of sin, "*Dissolution*," has overcome all, and *eight* new Slave States have been yielded, bought or conquered, and slaves have increased from a little over one half to nearly *four millions*.

Alas! it has affected the Church. Sixty years ago every religious body in the land was opposed to slavery, and opposed to it upon Bible principles. But admitting slaveholders to its communion, or suffering its members to become possessed of slaves by inheritance and purchase, in the hope thereafter to dissolve more easily the relation, it has, instead of doing this, only laid snares for its own feet. The friends of oppression have grown into a controlling majority. The Church has *lost*, not *gained*, power over the system, until silence on this vexed question, nay, an indorsal of the affirmed rightfulness of slavery, has become a *sine qua non* with the Southern churches. As deplorable is the fact, that it now appeals to the love of peace and unity among Northern Christians so

successfully, that they often forget the demand to be "*first pure*," in the anxiety to keep churches intact, and assemblies and conferences undisturbed by this agitating question. We do not exceed the truth when we say, there are many throughout the land with whom yielding has gone so far that they are almost worshippers of this idol. Slavery says to them : "Soothe our consciences with just one grain of incense." They answer, not like Polycarp, "Not a single grain," but throw down their whole moral and intellectual life, a peace-offering to the arrogance of a crime.

Are these things the arguments and the fruits of a divine institution guarded by Christianity ? It is false to all truth to think, or believe, or utter it. They are rather the arguments and the fruits of *wrong*, of a system founded in rapacity, and sustained by force, and defended by lies. Shall we say, then, that Christianity sanctions slavery ? That it is a patriarchal and a Christian thing ? Away with such falsehood ! I used to think them the words of a fanatic, but in sober truth no words so vividly portray American slavery as those of good John Wesley, who had been in the midst of it—" *It is the sum of all villanies.*"

The all-powerful word with slavery is *Profit !!* All other defences whatsoever are but a cover to this shameless and profane lust. It is a godless greed that wrests the Scriptures and silences the

pulpit, and expurgates the press, to maintain its hold on human chattels. It is a godless greed that clamors for a re-opening of the slave trade, that demands more slave territory, that insists upon the *control* of legislation in the *common* government, that asks concession after concession, ready to plunge into the horrors of civil war, to incur the guilt of perjury and treason, and to wring its skirts in blood to secure its rapacious demands: demands that are like the all-devouring grave, swallowing up generations, yet never saying, it is enough.

The arrogance of the South absolutely passes all bounds. Deference to its piety, to its consanguinity, to the non-slaveholding whites, and to its social and political connections with us, has made the North forbearing toward its sin, in the delusive hope that even fostering the giant in the days of weakness, might at last enable us to slay him when grown to his full strength.

But the world's eyes are open.

After an age of timid vacillation and yielding, the American people have given one decisive blow to oppression. It remains, for the few years before us, to put on record the decision of further timidity and abject concession to a most monstrous evil; or that other decision which shall be in accordance with the Word and the Providence of God, and the history of man, *Just and Best, what-*

ever it bring.—Nothing more to this cruel and insatiate greed, either in Church or State. Nothing but a patient, prayerful waiting, for the spirit of the gospel to work out the redemption of the bondmen in the States now corrupted and groaning under the colossal sin, the great towering crime of the nineteenth century and a Christian people.





